

World Harp Congress be... to a close

Israeli police detain Palestinian legislator

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) — Israeli police on Tuesday detained a prominent Palestinian legislator, Abbas Zaki, as he crossed from Jordan into the West Bank. Police spokesman Boaz Goldberg said Mr. Zaki was being questioned about allegations that he incited a riot in the West Bank last month and built a house on an archaeological site. The Palestinian legislative council, meeting in Ramallah on Tuesday, reacted angrily. "This is a very dangerous action," said the speaker, Ahmed Qureia. The Palestinians say that Israeli police have no right to detain members of the 88-seat legislature, which administers Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza. Mr. Zaki was held for several hours last month as he tried to cross from the West Bank into Jordan while en route to Vietnam. Police questioned him then about the same allegations he was being asked about Tuesday — that he incited a riot near the West Bank town of Hebron in which Palestinians set fire to bulldozers.

Jordan Times

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جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الراي

Palestinians commemorate Israeli athletes

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The head of the Palestinian team to the Olympic games took part in a memorial service in Atlanta for Israeli athletes killed at the Munich games 24 years ago, the Israeli press reported Tuesday. Muammar Bissio and the deputy head of the Palestinian Olympic committee, Rabin Al Turk, attended the ceremony organised Sunday by Atlanta's Jewish community to unveil a statue dedicated to the victims of Palestinian guerrillas in Munich, the Yediot Aharanot said. "All those who were present, especially the children of the Munich victims and Israeli athletes, were really impressed by the Palestinians' attendance," Israel's consul in Atlanta Arish Makul said. Mr. Bissio carefully avoided mentioning Mr. Makul's failed attempt to prevent the Palestinian delegation to Atlanta from marching behind the banner of "Palestine" at the games' opening ceremony. Yediot Aharanot also quoted him as saying: "I am against the shedding of blood. Even in 1972 I did not support terrorism. I hope international terrorism will end."

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King to visit Damascus this week; Netanyahu due Monday

By Rana Sabbagh
Reuters

AMMAN — King Hussein will visit Syria this week for talks with President Hafez Assad on ways to advance the stalled Middle East peace process, a Jordanian official said on Tuesday. "His Majesty will go to Syria in the coming few days, certainly before the visit to Jordan next Monday by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to see if there is a way to help forward the peace process," he told Reuters. Mr. Netanyahu angered Arab states by his rejection of the principle of trading

occupied Arab land for peace, the basis of the Middle East peace process launched in Madrid in 1991. Ties between Amman and Damascus were strained when Jordan signed a peace accord with Israel in 1994. The King, trying to revive the process, met Mr. Assad for the first time in three years in Cairo in June on the sidelines of an Arab summit called to counter Mr. Netanyahu's headline policies. They aired some of their mutual grievances and agreed to continue the dialogue in talks brokered by summit host Egyptian

President Hosni Mubarak, seeking to unite Arab ranks in the face of Israel's new Likud-led government. The King handed Mr. Assad a "security file" detailing 56 alleged Syrian-aided attempts to stage attacks against Jordan by radical Palestinian and Muslim groups over the last year, officials said. Syria has long denied involvement in political violence against Jordan, but Mr. Assad promised the monarch to follow on the file — a thorny issue in Jordanian-Syrian ties, marred by a history of mistrust and rivalry over their regional roles. Syria arrested several



Palestinian and Muslim militants in the last few weeks in Damascus, including Palestinian guer-



rilla Abdul Muti Abu Mualliq, alleged mastermind of several military attacks against Israel

through Jordan, officials said. "Mr. Abu Mualliq corresponds with the names that appeared on the security file we gave President Assad," a senior Jordanian official said. "They are showing us some positive signals before His Majesty's trip." Mr. Abu Mualliq belonged to the Islamic Jihad, part of a 10-member Damascus-based coalition of radical Palestinian groups opposed to peace deals with Israel, before defecting to the pro-Iranian Hizbollah-Palestine group. In a gesture of goodwill, the King telephoned Mr. Assad on Tuesday to con-

gratulate him on the victory of heptathlete Ghada Shouaa, who on Sunday clinched Syria's first gold medal in Olympics history. Jordan faces a difficult task, maintaining relations with fellow Arab leaders suspicious of its links to Israel while pursuing ties with Mr. Netanyahu. The King's planned trip to Damascus follows last week's meeting in Syria between Mr. Assad and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, his first official visit since ties were harmed by the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) 1993 peace deal with Israel. Meanwhile, Mr. Netanyahu is expected to

visit Jordan next Monday for talks on Middle East peace, an official said. "Most probably, and barring any last minute surprises, Mr. Netanyahu will visit us on Monday," said the official. The visit to Jordan would be Mr. Netanyahu's third trip abroad since his election on May 29. Mr. Netanyahu has visited both Washington and Cairo after taking office. Mr. Netanyahu was scheduled to visit Jordan on July 25, but the trip was cancelled mainly because King Hussein had to travel to London for a minor operation. The King returned home on Monday.

Decision on bread compensation measures delayed

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A government decision on the mechanism for compensating people for the lifting of subsidy on bread that was expected to be announced last night was postponed for further consideration. "We are still discussing the procedures, we want to make sure that the necessary measures are complete before we implement our plan to lift the subsidy," Minister of Information Marwan Muasher said. Dr. Muasher had told reporters Monday that the government would announce the mechanism to lift the bread subsidy on Tuesday at the end of the regular Cabinet session. The government is expected to compensate all Jordanian citizens for the price hike. Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti announced earlier this month that the compensation will take the form of salary increases for civil servants and army personnel. He said Jordanians who are not included under these two categories will be provided with coupons that will be exchanged for cash at the banks. The government says each Jordanian will be entitled for JD1.28 in compensation but foreign workers and tourists will have to bear the price difference. The debate over the lifting of government subsidy on bread began a few weeks ago when the government announced that it was facing a JD200 million budget deficit. It is also in compliance with an agreement with the International Monetary Fund which oversees Jordan's economic reform plan launched in 1989. Government officials cite increases in wheat prices on the international market for the decision and say the last shipment of wheat cost the treasury \$245 per tonne, \$175 more than the usual price of \$140. The previous government had allocated JD38 million for food subsidies for fiscal year 1996, while the current government says it needs JD190 million to

Palestinians: Settlements mean war

BETHLEHEM, West Bank (Agencies) — Palestinian leaders warned Tuesday of a return to war and bloodshed if Israel goes ahead with plans to relaunch a settlement drive on the West Bank. "When they confiscate my land, when they confiscate my water, when they confiscate my future, this means a declaration of war and war means bloodshed," said Justice Minister Freih Abu Medein. "They will lose peace not only with the Palestinians but with the Middle East, with Jordanians, Egyptians and everybody, and fundamentalism will grow," he told journalists. Ahmad Korei, one of the key Palestinian architects of the autonomy accords with Israel, said: "The Israelis are destroying the peace process." The pair were in Bethlehem for a meeting of the Palestinian legislative council to debate Jewish settlements and the disputed issue of Jerusalem. Israel's right-wing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met Monday in Jerusalem with settler leaders who have drawn up an action plan to double their numbers

in the Palestinian territories, currently 145,000, by the turn of the century. Mr. Netanyahu encouraged them to expand existing settlements. His government is also planning to restore tax benefits for settlers and build new major roads on the West Bank to allow them to bypass Palestinian areas. The Palestinian authority wants all settlements in the territories to be dismantled at the end of the interim period of autonomy in 1999 and bitterly opposes any expansion in the meantime. "The Israeli government is clearly in the process of violating the peace accords," said Mr. Korei, the speaker of the legislative council. "If it continues down this road and changes the status quo on the ground, there will no longer be any reason to continue the peace process and we will be forced to halt negotiations," he said. A deputy from Jerusalem, Ziyad Abu Zayad, said: "The Israeli government is continuing its policy of land confiscations, and that means it has no intention of achieving a reconciliation between the two peoples. If it continues there will be no need to continue the

peace process. I think the Palestinian leadership will review the whole subject and take some tough decisions." Some 145,000 Jews live in 140 settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, excluding those who live in annexed East Jerusalem. Israel's headline new Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon announced Tuesday the construction of a new town on the edge of the West Bank as he called for a return to the days of pioneering Zionism. The hawkish ex-general told his first press conference that he planned to build the town next to Beth Govrin kibbutz on the Israeli side of the "green line" separating the Jewish state from the West Bank. "The time has come to rescue Beth Govrin from its isolation," Mr. Sharon said. "The government must return to authentic Zionism. I hope the government's position on construction and development of Jewish population areas will be expressed in its policy on the ground," he said. Mr. Sharon, a champion of Jewish settlers and an outspoken opponent of Palestinian self-rule, wields an annual

budget of \$9 billion at the head of the infrastructure super-ministry. He flexed his muscles on Tuesday by ordering directors of national companies which come under his portfolio to attend his press briefing in Tel Aviv, including the heads of electricity, water, railways and the land office. He said he also planned to launch a population drive in the northern region of Galilee and to expand Beer-sheba in the southern Negev desert from 250,000 inhabitants to 500,000. As housing minister from 1990-1992, Mr. Sharon oversaw a massive construction drive in the settlements. Mr. Sharon leads the right-wing camp in the governing Likud Party. Mr. Sharon's plan calls for one road leading from the West Bank into northern Jerusalem and a second linking central Israel with Jewish settlements inside the West Bank. Israeli reports said the roads would pass through rural areas of the West Bank that were handed to Palestinian control last year, but where Israel maintains overall responsibility over security.

Mubarak, Clinton agree on peace, differ on terrorism

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak won assurances from President Bill Clinton Tuesday that the Mideast peace process will continue despite Israel's new regime but disputes over terrorism clouded their talks. Mr. Clinton has called for a new drive to isolate Libya, Iran, Iraq and Sudan as pariah states that sponsor terrorism but administration officials acknowledge that Mr. Mubarak does not share the view and could make waves. "The best that we can expect is ... that he does not publicly oppose us," an official said on condition of anonymity. Mr. Mubarak is the first Arab leader to meet officially with Mr. Clinton since Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu defeated Shimon Peres on May 29 and sparked concerns that a Likud government would put the brakes on the peace process. Mr. Netanyahu campaigned on a security-first platform bolstered by suicide attacks against Israeli citizens and he has rejected what is considered the cornerstone of the peace process: Israel's return of lands seized in the 1967 war in exchange for

peace with its Arab neighbors. Mr. Netanyahu made some conciliating noises during his Washington visit on July 9, but that apparently has failed to reassure Mr. Mubarak. So Mr. Clinton made a concerted effort to placate the Egyptian leader as they sat down for their talks at the White House Tuesday. "He reaffirmed to me when he was here ... that he would honour the Oslo accords in every way," Mr. Clinton said in reference to the 1993 pact signed by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. "So I think we have to give him a chance to do that and work on that assumption," Mr. Clinton added. The Oslo accord gave the Palestinians self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza and the pact is considered a giant step in bringing peace to the region. The talks will also center on the thorny issue of terrorism which is dominating the world's attention with the Group of Seven (G7) summit in Paris and a series of attacks on Americans. The G7 ministerial was called after 19 U.S. soldiers

were killed in an attack on a Saudi military base, and the suspicious crash of TWA 800 two weeks ago and the pipebomb at the Olympics are likely to feature prominently. They are also much on Mr. Clinton's mind and prompted him Sunday to call on U.S. allies to back new sanctions against Egypt's neighbors. "Terrorists are often supported by states, and states that sponsor or commit terrorism — including Iraq, Iran, Libya and Sudan and any others — must face strong sanctions," Mr. Clinton said. But Egypt — like many U.S. trade partners — objects and argues that the move could drive Sudan in particular into a more extreme stand. "Egypt has concerns," the administration acknowledged, adding that Mr. Mubarak "does not want to push in the direction that we are pushing right now." The official said Mr. Clinton and Mr. Mubarak would be discussing other options for dealing with Sudan and added that the administration had its own concerns about Egypt's "position regarding Libya."

Syria's Shehabi: Military option not ruled out

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Syria's army chief said Tuesday that Damascus refused to rule out the use of military force against Israel in its fight to win back its rights. "Our rights are legitimate and we will work for peace using every possible legitimate means, especially diplomatic. But if we are foiled then every other option is a possibility," army Chief-of-Staff General Hekmat Shehabi told the ruling party's daily Al Baath. "Over the past few decades the military option was the only means available to Syria to combat Israeli aggression against Arab land and in the occupied territories," the general said. He also said that "Syria would make no concession concerning the need for a total Israeli retreat to the lines of June 4, 1967," a reference to the Golan Heights which was seized by Israel in the 1967 six-day war and later annexed. Israel's right-wing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has publicly ruled out a return of the Golan to Syria, in contrast to his Labour predecessor Shimon Peres who said a with-

drawal was necessary for peace. Gen. Shehabi accused Mr. Netanyahu of "abandoning the principle of exchanging land-for-peace by imposing his own personal interpretations on the foundations of the peace process." "Ruling out the exchange of land-for-peace would mean a halt and total collapse of the peace process," Gen. Shehabi said. Gen. Shehabi became the first Syrian chief-of-staff to meet his Israeli counterpart, General Ehud Barak, in Washington in December 1994 as part of peace talks with the Jewish state. Meanwhile, Mr. Netanyahu said Monday that Israel was in contact with Syria using the United States as go-between to try to resume stalled peace talks. "We are in contact with Syria via the United States and we are talking about the possibility of resuming discussions. I support this," Mr. Netanyahu told Israeli radio's Arabic service. "The Syrians have proposed a resumption of negotiations at Wye Plantation" outside Washington, where the last round of talks took

place. Former Israeli Premier Shimon Peres called off the talks in February at the start of a wave of suicide bombings by Islamic extremists in the Jewish state that killed 58 people. Mr. Netanyahu said he backed Syria's request for discussions to resume on the basis of a letter of invitation to the Madrid conference in October 1991 that first launched the Arab-Israeli peace process. However, the right-wing prime minister ruled out a second demand from Damascus that the talks pick up where they left off in February. "We are not tied by any verbal commitments which the former government may have given," he stressed. According to the radio's commentator, Mr. Netanyahu was referring to the possibility of an Israeli withdrawal from the strategic Golan Heights. Mr. Netanyahu also proposed "comprehensive talks" between Israel and Syria to include the issue of Lebanon "in order to avoid a build-up there which could spin out of control."

Korei, deputies resign

BETHLEHEM, West Bank (AFP) — The speaker of the Palestinian legislative council, Ahmed Korei, said Tuesday he was resigning after a row with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat over drawing up a constitution. "I resign," said Mr. Korei, a key Palestinian negotiator for the autonomy accords with Israel, during a session of the council in the West Bank town of Bethlehem. He clashed with Mr. Arafat tried yet again to stop the legislative council debating a temporary constitution at a session convened in the West Bank town of Bethlehem. Mr. Korei's two deputies and the secretary general of the council followed his example in resigning, leading to the session being suspended until Wednesday. On two previous occasions Mr. Arafat has urged the council not to start a debate over the constitution drawn up by a parliament-

Iranians pull out of northern Iraq

ERBIL, Iraq (AFP) — Iranian troops pulled back towards the Iran-Iraq border on Tuesday after a deadly two-day offensive against Iranian Kurdish rebels inside northern Iraq, U.N. officials said. Meanwhile Tehran justified the incursion in a letter to U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali by invoking its "right to self-defence" against cross border raids by the Iraqi-based Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (DPK). A U.N. official in Erbil in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq said most Iranian troops had left Sulaimaniyah for Iran in 100 vehicles by midday Tuesday and that the remainder would "most probably follow on Tuesday night." A senior U.N. officer here, who asked not to be named, said the troops began to withdraw from a DPK camp in Koi Sanjaq late Monday after bombarding it for two days. "The situation there is quiet now," the officer told AFP, adding that troops had moved to the Ranya area further east, towards the Iranian border. An official at the office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees in Erbil said

roads had been reopened around Koi Sanjaq following the withdrawal. He added that the UNHCR in Erbil was dealing with an "urgent situation" coping with around 2,500 refugees, mostly women and children, who fled Koi Sanjaq on Sunday and Monday after Iranian troops shelled their camp 50 kilometres inside Iraq. Taymour Mustafay, a DPK spokesman in Erbil, said Tuesday that only part of the Iranian force had withdrawn and that "others have stayed in the Ranya area." The DPK said 2,000 Iranian soldiers crossed into Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq last Thursday to attack the rebel bases. Iran said Monday it had crushed Iranian Kurdish rebels in a massive incursion using ground troops, air strikes and artillery, and had killed at least 20 "important" members of the DPK. Abdullah Said, head of the UNHCR office in Baghdad, said some refugees fleeing the fighting around Koi Sanjaq had been killed and others injured, but said he did not know how many. The DPK said two people, a man and a woman, were killed in the onslaught on their camp.

In the letter to Dr. Ghali, Iran said it had acted "in response to encroachments by terrorist armed groups and in accordance with its right to self defence." "The government of Iraq is not in a position to exercise effective control over territory in the northern part of the country," it added, quoted by the official Iranian news agency IRNA. Northern Iraq has been controlled by Iraqi Kurds with allied protection and in defiance of Baghdad since the end of the Gulf war. The Iraqi government on Monday protested against the Iranian incursion and demanded Tehran withdraw its troops immediately. Iran also came under fire from the United States on Monday. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns called for an immediate withdrawal and said: "There is nothing to justify an Iranian incursion into northern Iraq." U.N. agencies and non-governmental organisations continued Tuesday to try to distribute food, water, shelter and medical care to the refugees who flocked to the office of the UNHCR in Erbil.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued on page 3)

A large group of soldiers in camouflage uniforms and helmets posing for a group photo. The soldiers are arranged in several rows, with some standing and some kneeling or sitting in the front. They are all wearing helmets and some have patches on their uniforms. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The image is in black and white and has a grainy, high-contrast appearance.

Pepper (hot)	320/200
Pepper (sweet)	320/200
Potato	320/220
String Bean	650/400
Sweet melon	220/140
Tomato	120/70

17:20	Shariqah (AH)
20:00	Dubai (EK)
23:10	Tel Aviv (LY)
23:50	Laraca (CY)
00:20	Amsterdam (KL)
04:00	Athens (AK)
04:35	Antalia (TK)
07:25	Tel Aviv (LY)
07:45	Beirut. London (BA)

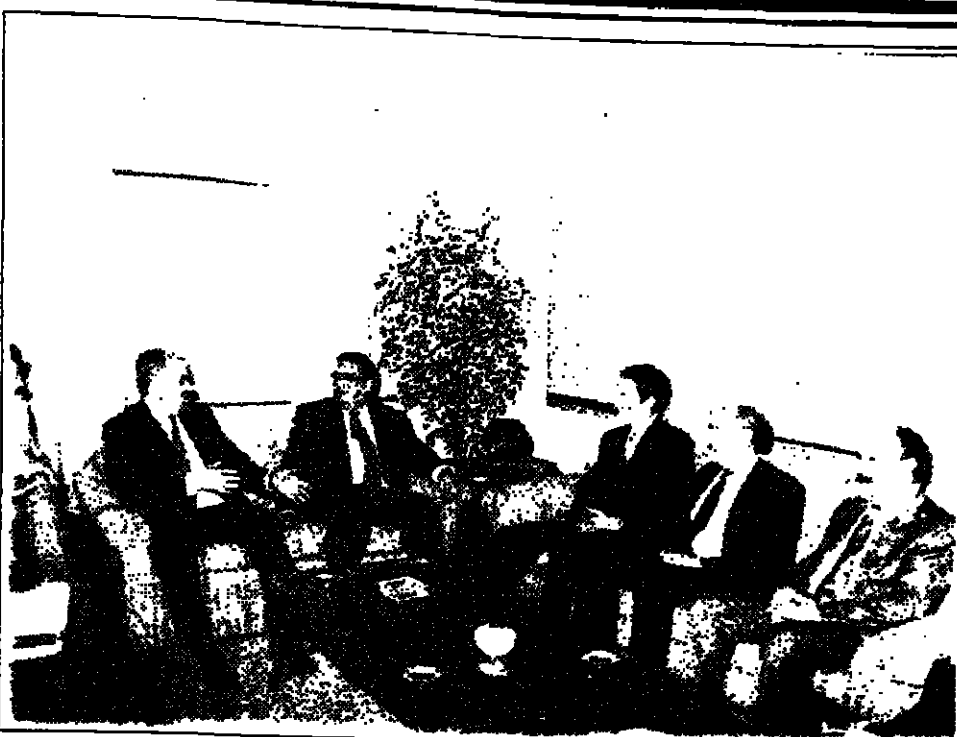
Royal Wings (RW) Flights
 20:30 Aqaba (QALA) (RW)

MARKET PRICES

Upperdown price in fils per kg.

Apple	700/500
Banana	600/600
Bananas (mulkharmar)	520/520
Bananas (imported)	800/600
Cabbage	400/500
Carrot	170/90
Cauliflower	220/150
Cucumber (large)	220/140
Cucumber (small)	370/220
Eggplant	180/120
Garlic	650/400
Grapes	450/280
Lemon	660/400
Marrow (large)	250/150
Marrow (small)	370/250
Mulukhiyah	110/70
Onion (dry)	150/80
Okra	750/450
Pea	670/450
Pear	750/500
Peach	770/500
Pepper (hot)	320/200
Pepper (sweet)	330/300
Potato	320/220
String Bean	650/400
Sweet melon	220/140
Tomato	120/70

[illegible]



Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hashem Dabbas (second from left) Tuesday meets with visiting Algerian Minister of Trade Abdul Karim Hashrawi (Petra photo)

Algeria offers Kingdom advice on oil, gas industry

AMMAN (Petra) — Visiting Algerian Minister of Trade Abdul Karim Hashrawi Tuesday offered his country's expertise in oil and natural gas exploration and development to Jordan.

"Algeria has vast experience in oil/gas exploration and development and is ready to offer assistance in this field including responding to accidents and training officials on the latest safety measures applied at oil and gas fields," said Mr. Hashrawi during a meeting with Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hashem Dabbas.

Mr. Hashrawi said that his country can also offer advice on the electrification of rural regions, adding that 95 per cent of the rural areas of Algeria receive electric power.

The two ministers agreed that an Algerian delegation should visit Jordan in Sept. to follow up on discussions with the Natural Resources Authority (NRA) in oil and gas related matters.

Outlining the general

energy situation in Jordan, Dr. Dabbas said the NRA and the foreign oil companies operating in Jordan have already drilled 90 wells while prospecting for oil.

Both the NRA and the National Oil Company have conducted surveys and seismological tests in different regions in the course of oil and gas prospecting operations, he said.

Jordan can also benefit from Algerian experiments in laying pipeline networks for gas and oil to serve major towns and industrial centres, he added.

Mr. Hashrawi met Tuesday with representatives of the Amman Chamber of Industry and told them that coming days will "witness fruitful cooperation" between Jordan and Algeria in economic fields.

Speaking at the meeting attended by business people from both sides, Mr. Hashrawi said his country calls for lifting all customs barriers with Arab countries in order to promote inter-

Arab trade.

Abdul Noor Habaibeh, the chamber's secretary, said opportunities exist for economic and trade relations with Algeria, although the lack of direct air, maritime, and land transportation between the two countries are to blame for the limited trade so far.

According to the Amman Chamber of Commerce, last year Jordan sold Algeria JD 7.5 million worth of products in exchange for JD 800,000 worth of Algerian goods.

Later Mr. Hashrawi met Minister of Transport Nasser Lawzi and reviewed a draft agreement on land and maritime transport and an amendment to the existing air transport between the countries.

Following the meeting, Mr. Lawzi said the amendment to air transport is aimed at increasing flights to either country by the Algerian and Jordanian airlines.

Minister allays fears about Israeli pull-back in transport agreements

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Transport Minister Nasser Lawzi Tuesday minimised concerns that Israel is trying to obstruct development and cooperation with the Kingdom in the transport sector.

A sense of uneasiness was evident in recent international and Israeli news reports alleging that the new Israeli government intends to doom joint Jordanian-Israeli transport projects.

"There has not been any official pull back on the initial transport scenario worked out at a very high level in the frame of the Transport Agreement between the two countries," Mr. Lawzi told the Jordan Times, "and the joint Jordanian-Israeli committee on transport is working as scheduled."

The Jerusalem Post reported yesterday that Israeli Transport Minister Yitshak Levy Sunday rejected a request by Royal Jordanian (RJ) to fly between Haifa and Amman.

"We have not asked for any new route," Vice President of Public Relations at RJ Muniib Toukan told the Jordan Times.

RJ's sister company Royal Wings, last April inaugurated its 30-minute five-weekly flights from Marka Civil Airport, Amman, to Tel Aviv, and, according to the Jerusalem Post, "the airline has been pressing to fly to Haifa and to begin flights between Ben Gurion Airport and Aqaba."

Royal Wings' Israeli counterpart, Arkia, operating under El Al, started its five weekly flights on the same route originating Tel Aviv at the end of June.



Nasser Lawzi

"The Jordanian side of the joint committee on transport might include in the next meeting's agenda a request for new destinations or extra-passengers or extra frequency," Mr. Lawzi said, "but we have not forwarded any such request so far."

According to the transport agreement signed between Jordan and Israel last January in fulfilment of the peace treaty, the joint committee is to hold meetings every six months.

"As scheduled, we met last April and are going to meet again in October," Mr. Lawzi said.

Regarding news agencies and media reports that the Infrastructure Minister of Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud cabinet is opposing plans for the construction of a joint Jordanian-Israeli airport near the Gulf of Aqaba to serve both the Red Sea resorts of Aqaba and Eilat, Mr. Lawzi said that "we heard about such remarks by the minister's spokesman from the media, but we have not been approached officially."

The Jordanian-Israeli joint airport project, expected to boost tourism in the

region and help Israeli and Jordanian airlines transport at least one million passengers each year, enjoyed the support of former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and the Clinton administration.

The U.S. funded a \$500,000 feasibility study for the \$80 million project. "We are awaiting the final report by the U.S. consultant in charge of the feasibility study any time from now," Mr. Lawzi said.

Dismissing fears that new hard-line Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon will not continue in the previous government's support for the project, Mr. Lawzi told the Jordan Times that "the two governments will take a joint decision according to the results of the feasibility study."

Princess Basma inaugurates family guidance, awareness centre Zarqa youth say they need more social facilities

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

ZARQA — A group of Zarqa youths voiced their concerns over the lack of public facilities Tuesday, and called on officials to furnish them with parks and clubs.

The youths' call came following the official ceremony opening of the Family Guidance and Awareness Centre in Zarqa by HRH Princess Basma.

During a discussion with Princess Basma and Zarqa government officials, the youngsters complained about the lack of recreational facilities particularly during summer holidays.

In response to their requests, the Princess told the youths "the future is yours and you have to help

us by providing us with your thoughts and ideas to insure yourselves bright prospects."

The young people were part of a group which took part in the Voluntary Youth Programme, organised by the Zarqa Homemakers Association (ZHMA).

"After attending the youth programme we learned about the many problems that we will encounter during our younger years and ways to battle and face them," one youth said addressing Princess Basma.

During the opening ceremony, Princess Basma stressed the importance of establishing such a centre saying: "I am confident that this centre will serve the Zarqa community."

The centre, which is affiliated to ZHMA, has been

operating since April and will offer social, psychological, legal and health guidance to the Zarqa community.

Nadia Bushnaq, president of the ZHMA said the association, in cooperation with Al Kutba Institute for Human Development Centre, conducted a comprehensive study within the Zarqa community which revealed many problems affecting Zarqa community.

"Our town has undergone several social, political and economic changes, which caused pressures leading to an increase in family problems," Ms. Bushnaq said.

Ms. Bushnaq pointed out that the changes caused an increase in domestic violence in the past five years, adding that during the years 1990 to 1990 there were

477 reported cases of domestic violence, while between the years 1985 and 1989 there were only 210 such cases.

She added that other social problems that developed because of the change in the social structure are an increase in the number of divorces, school dropouts, and juvenile delinquencies and increased drug abuse, especially among teenagers.

Princess Basma voiced her appreciation to the national and international sectors which donated funds to establish the centre.

The Princess then distributed shields of honour to Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy Simon Collis, Canadian Ambassador to Jordan Michele de

Salaberry, Abdul Majeed Shoman of the Arab Bank and Haseeb Sabbagh of the Diana-Tamari-Sabbagh Organisation, who granted the ZHMA the funds to establish the centre.

Also during the official ceremony, Princess Basma distributed certificates to 18 graduates who attended two courses: "Marriage Seminar" and "Flower Arranging."

Earlier in the day, the Princess presented graduation certificates to 100 graduates of the Vocational Training Centre for Women in Zarqa at the Zarqa Government College hall.

The Princess also opened a vocational exhibition which included tailoring, flower arrangements, and woodwork.

WHAT'S GOING ON

JERASH FESTIVAL

- Concert by British Cavern Beatles Troupe at the South Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- Maitrise de Hauts des Seines (children choir) at Arlimes Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- Concert by talented child Hatham Al Shomali at Gracia Theatre at 9:30 p.m.
- Poetry recital by Jordanian poets at Gracia Theatre at 8:00 p.m.
- Concert by the International Family Band at the Sound and Light Theatre at 8:30 p.m.
- Egyptian National Circus and British Five Star Circus at the Main Theatre at 6:30 p.m.
- Performances by the Jordanian Armed Forces Musical Band, the Rozana Troupe of Popular Folklore, Al Husun Club Group, and Dalshar Group of Azeri Folklore at the Main Theatre at 6:30 p.m.
- Poetry recitals by Jordanian, Iraqi, and Moroccan poets at Darat Al Funn, Jabal Weibdeh (6:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m.)

EXHIBITIONS

- Plastic (abstract) art by Ayman Gharaibeh at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Aug. 1.
- "Pioneers of the Fifties" — Works by Iraqi artists Ismail Sheikhly, Khalid Qasab, Suzanne Sheikhly, and Nur Behjet at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Uthman (Tel. 826932), until Aug. 1.

Decision on bread compensation measures delayed

(Continued from page 1)

subsidise bread and other food commodities including rice, sugar and powder milk. Bread in Jordan was much cheaper than in neighbouring countries that encourages smuggling out of the Kingdom, the government says.

Though the prices of wheat on the international market has increased fourfold since 1994, bread and flour prices in Jordan have not been increased and the government continued to subsidise the 660,000 tonnes of wheat Jordanians consume annually.

The government move has drawn sharp criticism from opposition which urged the government to "find alternative" solutions to contain the budget deficit.

Some deputies threatened to seek a non-confidence vote in the government if it went ahead and raised the prices.

Opposition charges the move would lead to the deterioration in the living standard of Jordanians.

His Majesty King Hussein extended total support for the government decision and appealed to Jordan to accept it.

Poet ends hunger strike, accepts job offer

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A Jordanian poet who had staged a one-week strike, and was pledging to starve himself to death because he was jobless for six years, Monday evening ended his demonstration after accepting a job offer.

Mohammad Ibrahim Lafi, 50, who was temporary residing at the Jordanian writers Society (JWS), staged a strike last week protesting the lack of job opportunities since 1990.

On Monday the Director of Radio and Television Corporation (RTC) Hassan Ramzi visited the JWS and offered Mr. Lafi a job at the institution, according to Mohammad Masheikh, the society's secretary.

"Upon hearing of Mr. Lafi's strike, Mr. Hassan (Ramzi), a JWS member, met with the administrative committee and decided to offer Mr. Lafi a position as

an advisor at the RTC," Mr. Masheikh told the Jordan Times.

He added that the job offered to Mr. Lafi entailed evaluating the poetry of young writers to be presented to the RTC.

Mr. Lafi had told the Jordan Times that the hunger strike was his final solution after his financial situation deteriorated and he had no money to buy food.

Since his return to the Kingdom in 1990, after residing temporarily in Syria and Lebanon, Mr. Lafi said he tried to seek a job at various governmental cultural institutes but failed.

He began his literature activities in 1973, and since then has written and published six collections.

Mr. Lafi was unavailable for comment Tuesday evening, but according to Mr. Masheikh "Mr. Lafi was really happy and satisfied with the new job offer."

Korei, deputies resign

(Continued from page 1)

itary committee, but to allow a Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) committee to draw up an alternative.

"Why are you debating the constitution? I said that you could not debate it because the project has not been officially handed down to you," Mr. Arafat told the self-rule council Tuesday.

Mr. Korei immediately replied that this issue had already been resolved two weeks ago and that Mr. Arafat had agreed a compromise.

Under the agreement reached earlier this month the council was allowed to continue its debate while a

parallel discussion took place within the PLO committee.

The constitution to cover the remainder of the interim period of Palestinian autonomy up to 1999 is of vital importance to the self-rule council, which cannot pass legislation until it is in place.

Many councillors, who won seats in the Palestinians' first general elections in January at the same time Mr. Arafat was elected as president, accuse Mr. Arafat of working to curb their powers.

Mr. Arafat already clashed with the council at a session held in the West Bank town of Ramallah last week, again over its insistence on debating a constitution.

'World Breastfeeding Week' to stress community responsibility

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Under the motto: "Breastfeeding: A Community Responsibility" this year's World Breastfeeding Week will be launched Thursday by the Ministry of Health in cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

As a response to Jordan's needs the Ministry of Health added the two country-related items this health promotion campaign: "proper weaning practice" and "concentration on exclusive breastfeeding from birth to 4-6 months."

The latter, according to a 1993 UNICEF survey, is of special importance as babies in Jordan are only

exclusively breast-fed for 3 months.

UNICEF believes that for this reason the "community responsibility" motto is important because it demonstrates the need for breastfeeding-promotion in public awareness campaigns in the media and health education seminars.

The agency sees breastfeeding as an important factor in child health and a means of natural birth spacing.

To encourage mothers towards breastfeeding World Breastfeeding Week is also promoting "baby-friendly hospitals" (BFH) initiative. Al Bashir Hospital, Amman's only government-run hospital, will serve as a role model supporting this idea, a

UNICEF statement said Tuesday.

The concept was discussed at a breastfeeding seminar, which took place in July last year in Amman.

To become a BFH-hospital, hospitals and maternity centres must practise 10 steps to successful breastfeeding developed by UNICEF and the World Health Organisation (WHO), including trained staff to implement the breastfeeding policy that encourages mothers to breastfeed and makes them familiar with its advantages to them and their children.

Experts in child nutrition, the statement said, agreed that breastfeeding is the most effective way to provide a baby with a caring environment and it is at the

same time the best nutrition to protect the infant against infections and diseases.

It is the programme's goal to restrain mothers from feeding their children with infant formulas and hospital formulae from separating mother and baby at birth, the statement said.

The "Take the Baby-Friendly-Initiative" by the UNICEF claims that the lives of over one-and-a-half million children in the developing world can be saved by women breastfeeding their children and therefore preventing malnutrition and infection and illnesses like anemia, osteoporosis and multiple sclerosis.

The 'World Breastfeeding Week' will last from Aug. 1st till 7.

AI appeals to Jordan to commute death sentence

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Amnesty International has issued an appeal on behalf of Mustafa Suleiman Abu Hamid, who was sentenced to death on Feb. 27 for murdering his secretary.

Mr. Abu Hamid was sentenced to death by the Criminal Court after he was found guilty of the murder of Maysoun Tawfiq in Syria on Oct. 23, 1994.

His sentence was ratified by the Court of Cassation on June 12. Amnesty says that the sentence was also ratified by His Majesty King Hussein, which

opposed the death penalty in all cases, urged human rights activists to appeal to the King and members of the government.

In its July 2 statement, Amnesty quoted the convict as alleging he was tortured following his arrest in April 1995.

According to Amnesty's statement, Abu Hamid said he confessed to the crime after severe torture.

During his trial, Abu Hamid complained to the court, but no medical reports were brought before the court, and no investigation was ordered by the judge, Amnesty said.

"This violates Article 5 of the Annex of the United Nations 'Safeguards guar-

anteeing protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty," the statement said.

Amnesty also charged that Abu Hamid was held for one month in police custody and was denied access to his lawyer.

The human rights organisation called for a full investigation into his alleged torture, urging that the procedure and results of the investigations be made public.

The statement said that although the government of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, "has stated that it is putting human rights on its agenda and has recently established a Centre for the Study of Freedom and Democracy

and Human Rights, this has not affected the imposition of the death penalty."

Seven people have been executed since the beginning of the year. Last year eight people were put to death for various crimes.

Amnesty International has repeatedly expressed its concern to the Jordanian government about what the organisation sees as the application of the use of the death penalty over the past two years.

"Amnesty International is deeply concerned at the extension of the use of the death penalty that these executions represent," the statement said.

Sri Lankan troops kill 54 rebels, Tamil parties call for peace talks

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lankan troops have killed 54 Tamil guerrillas after overrunning a northern town held by the rebels since 1990, and are poised to advance further into Tiger territory, the military said Tuesday.

The Defence Ministry said radio transmissions of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) had admitted to 54 deaths within its ranks since the military launched a major offensive towards the town of Paranthan Friday.

"So far 54 names of cadres killed have been released over the LTTE transmissions," a military statement said, adding that the rebels had mostly fled Paranthan.

It said the army was firing heavy artillery and the air force was bombing the rebels who are reportedly building up their strength in nearby Kilinochchi, 324 kilometres north of Colombo.

"Terrorists continue their mortar attacks into the newly-captured areas," the

statement said. "(The) troops... are taking precautions and hence have not suffered any casualties."

Sri Lanka mounted its military offensive codenamed True Victory Friday from the garrison at the narrow Elephant Pass, the gateway to Jaffna peninsula on the country's northern tip.

The troops backed by army, heavy artillery and air power quickly came pouring down nearly 10 kilometres of the pass to capture the town of Paranthan in just 24 hours.

Military officials say their aim is to capture Kilinochchi, which the LTTE made its new political headquarters when it lost control of the Jaffna peninsula to government troops in May.

The True Victory offensive was launched by Sri Lanka a week after the powerful LTTE overwhelmed a large military garrison in northeastern Mullaitivu, allegedly slaughtering more than 1,200 soldiers.

It was the worst military debacle for Sri Lanka, where more than 50,000

people have been killed in the LTTE's prolonged campaign for a Tamil homeland in Sri Lanka's north and east.

The fresh fighting came as Sri Lanka's mainstream Tamil parties urged the government to resume unconditional peace talks with the Tigers in a bid to end the ethnic conflict.

Three of the parties also ridiculed the government for insisting that the LTTE should surrender a large quantity of weapons before further negotiations.

"Looking at ground realities, it is necessary (for the government) to speak to the LTTE," said Joseph Pararajasingham of the moderate Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF).

The comments from the Tamil parties followed the statement Sunday by Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, who ruled out further talks with the LTTE unless it surrendered a substantial quantity of arms and renounced violence.

"All other Tamil (militant)

groups including ours laid down arms in 1987," said Dharmalingam Siddhathan of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE). "What do we have to show to our people? What have we achieved?"

The TULF's Pararajasingham added: "The other militant groups surrendered their weapons in 1987. But they achieved nothing. How can one expect the Tigers to emulate them?"

The LTTE considers other Tamil groups as "traitors" and has been killing their members and leaders for almost a decade. No other Tamil group is allowed to function in LTTE-controlled areas.

Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga began peace talks with the LTTE after taking power in August 1994. The LTTE broke off the negotiations and resumed its separatist war in April 1995. More than 50,000 people have died in the separatist campaign.



A protester jumps off from a rooftop towards a group of riot police during a demonstration in Hong Kong Tuesday (Reuters photo)

4 injured in clash at Hong Kong's anti-China outpost

HONG KONG (R) — Four people were injured in scuffles between riot police and demonstrators Tuesday as residents of a controversial pro-Taiwan Nationalist shanty town forced officials to delay its clearance.

The government promised they will not tear down the homes today and they will give you two weeks to have your homes surveyed," George Ng, a local official mediating in the dispute, told the protesting residents at Rennie's Mill.

About 100 demonstrators demanding better compensation when their homes are demolished to make way for a housing development had blockaded a road to the squatter town as some 175 police, most wearing full riot gear, attempted to force them out.

"The government is abusing its powers and breaking its promises," the protesters chanted as they stood on the shoulders of boxes and empty cooking gas cylinders blocking the road, and refused to move.

Frayed and faded Taiwan flags still fluttered over the township on the coast of the

British colony's Kowloon peninsula, once a haven for thousands of vanquished nationalist Kuomintang soldiers who fled the 1949 Communist takeover of China.

Hong Kong will be handed back to China at midnight on June 30 next year, and many residents opposed to the demolition have argued that the government's plan to raze the township to clear the way for a housing development had hidden political motives.

China regards Taiwan, where the Kuomintang government fled in 1949, as a renegade province.

One demonstrator jumped from the roof of a building onto riot police trying to break through the barricades.

"It's okay to sacrifice myself," he told a Reuters reporter before he leapt.

The protester was injured, as well as one of the police officers. Two other protesters sustained minor injuries in the scuffle, and a government media officer fainted, witnesses said.

Confronted by the violence, the government gave in, and the demonstrators

promised to take down their barricades.

"The residents requested to have two weeks to have their homes surveyed," said Lau Kai-Hung, assistant director of the Housing Department. "We don't have a problem with that."

The residents want independent surveys to aid their court actions against the clearance and win better compensation.

With the fighting over, demonstrators, many still wearing yellow headbands emblazoned with vows to defend their homes, and police officers sat around the barricades smoking cigarettes.

The 235 remaining families at Rennie's Mill have known for more than a year that the township would be demolished, but have fought for better compensation.

Last month, Hong Kong's high court upheld their right to better compensation, ordering the government to pay more. Some families have not received compensation officers, and residents were demanding more time to finalise arrangements.

Japan lifts defence budget ceiling to 2.88% growth

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's three ruling parties agreed Tuesday to limit the increase in the defence budget for the coming year to 2.88 per cent, up from a 2.58 per cent rise in the current year, coalition sources reportedly said.

The accord, reported by local news agencies and Japan Broadcasting Corp. (NHK), represented a compromise between the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the left-wing Social Democratic Party (SDP).

The LDP was said to be seeking a rise of more than 3.5 per cent while the SDP was pushing for an increase smaller than this year's figure. New Party Sakigake, the smallest party in the coalition, had reportedly said it would not accept any increase of more than three per cent.

With the agreement, Japan's defence budget is poised to grow at a faster

rate than its foreign aid budget for the first time since the current budget ceiling system was introduced in 1982, Jiji Press said.

On Monday, the three parties agreed to limit the increase in Japan's foreign aid budget to 2.6 per cent in the fiscal year starting next April, the smallest increase in 14 years and down from seven per cent in the current year.

Hideo Usui, the director general of the Defence Agency who is also from the LDP, the biggest coalition partner, had called for an increase of 4.5 per cent in a meeting earlier Tuesday with Finance Minister Wataru Kubo.

"We would like to raise the defence budget by 4.5 per cent," the Japanese defence chief was quoted as saying. "But we will consider the matter further, with the aim of limiting the extent of the rise."

Mr. Kubo, who hails from

the SDP, asked Mr. Usui to curb the increase as other ministries are cutting their outlays in the national budget for the fiscal year starting next April, Finance Ministry officials said.

Following the separate agreement to slash the increase in Japan's budget for Official Development Assistance (ODA), Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto called Tuesday for quality rather than quantity in aid to developing countries.

"We need to find out what is being sought at the grassroots level," he was quoted as saying.

The 2.6-per cent growth rate agreed to Monday represented a compromise between Mr. Kubo, whose ministry wanted to limit the increase to 1.4 per cent, and Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda whose ministry was pushing for 5.6 per cent.

Dutch, Germans stage anthem battle

LLORET DE MAR, Spain (R) — Drunken Dutch and German tourists at a Spanish resort got into a war of national anthems that came to blows, landing one person in hospital and three in jail, police said. The battle in the Lloret de Mar bar zone on the northwest coast started when 30 "very drunk" Dutch began singing their national song. A group of Germans countered with their anthem. "The two groups started to egg each other on, singing their own anthems louder and louder, until it turned to insults and fighting," a police source said. Riot police broke up the confrontation and detained three Dutch. A German man hurt in the fray was taken to a hospital, where doctors said he was improving and would soon be released.

Godfather of soul revives Atlanta's party

ATLANTA (R) — Last time out he was rudely interrupted by a bomb. Second time around nothing could stop Mister James Brown, the godfather of soul. In a downtown concert, Georgia's own screaming senior citizen brought the Olympic City of Atlanta back to life. Soul man, sex machine, get up, Brown did them all. Saturday's bombing of the Centennial Olympic Park a block away was beaten. Brown wasn't alone.

Kindly thief returns artificial hand with ring

LOS ANGELES (R) — A thief who stole a woman's bag in a suburban mall made amends by leaving behind her artificial hand inside the bag, complete with a ring the victim's boyfriend gave her. Maintenance workers at Westminister Mall found the \$7,600 prosthetic hand belonging to Laura Ferguson, 29, inside her stolen bag under the counter of an ice-cream shop Monday. The hand, with Ms. Ferguson's \$2,000 amethyst-and-diamond ring on the index finger, was found not far from the theft, police said. Ms. Ferguson was at a restaurant when she put down her bag to pay. The hand, with painted veins, freckles and acrylic nails, gets hot in summer, so she had taken it off.

Sardines and sweets save lost Italian hiker

ROME (R) — A 77-year-old Italian doctor who lost his way on a mountain hike was saved by a trail of sardine cans and sweet wrappers that he left for rescuers once he realised he was lost. Rescue workers, using the improvised trail, traced Giuseppe Guido Ippolito, a Rome doctor on holiday in the Italian Alps, to an abandoned hay loft where he had taken shelter for the night. Dr. Ippolito told Il Messaggero newspaper he was usually critical of Italy's state services, but the Alpine rescuers were "one of the few things, as I experienced, that work in Italy."

Enthusiasts await world's biggest flower

LONDON (R) — Hundreds of plant lovers descended on London's Kew Gardens Monday hoping to catch a rare glimpse of the world's largest — and smelliest — flower. They were undeterred by the fact that when it blooms sometime this week the three-foot wide Titan Arum exudes an odour described as a mixture of rotting fish and dead mice. Titan Arums, which bloom only once every six or seven years of their 20-year lives, are known as "corpse flowers" in their native jungles on the Indonesian island of Sumatra.



Rescue workers in El Salvador carry the body of a victim in a mudslide caused by fierce rains from hurricane Cesar. Central America sifted through the aftermath of the hurricane, whose rains and mudslides killed at least 48 people and forced thousands from their homes (Reuters photo)

Pacific storm heads towards Mexico

SAN SALVADOR (AFP) — Tropical storm Douglas headed for Mexico's Pacific coast Tuesday after the storm system left 48 dead in its destructive path through Central America.

Douglas, born of remnants of tropical storm Cesar which gathered strength in the Pacific, packed 130-kilometre winds as it moved toward southern Mexico at 33 kilometres per hour, according to the U.S. National Weather Service.

Mexico issued tropical storm warnings for the area from the town of Salina Cruz to the resort city of Acapulco.

In El Salvador, Deputy Interior Minister Roberto Machon said flooding, mudslides and cave-ins killed six children and four adults nationwide. Forty families were cut off by flooding in isolated rural areas, he said.

The storm caused millions of dollars of damage and left thousands homeless as it ravaged Central America.

On arriving in the Caribbean off Nicaragua, Cesar was upgraded to a hurricane. And in Nicaragua, it was downgraded to a tropical depression but after crossing a stretch of the Pacific coast Sunday it gained strength and was renamed Douglas.

Cesar first struck Venezuela as a tropical storm last week, dumping driving rain on hillside slums in Caracas and causing landslides and home collapses that killed four people.

Churning westward, Cesar hit Colombia's Caribbean coast Friday, killing five people in the coastal cities of Santa Marta,

Barranquilla and Cartagena.

Crossing Costa Rica's low-lying Atlantic coast, Cesar left 24 dead and 30 missing. Losses were estimated at \$24 million.

Meanwhile in Nicaragua, three died with losses estimated in the millions. Earlier reports put the national death toll there at four.

Nicaraguan President Violeta Chamorro declared a state of emergency Sunday after Cesar tore through Nicaragua. In addition to the dead, five were missing and some 10,000 were left homeless, according to the Civil Defence and Red Cross.

Cesar flooded Managua shantytowns on the shores of Lake Managua and partially destroyed homes made of wood and sheets of zinc, plastic and cardboard, according to authorities who reported receiving desperate calls for help.

Costa Rica sustained worse than expected damage. In addition to the 24 dead, some 4,400 people were homeless after homes washed into rivers in the south. Several highways were washed out, officials said.

The Costa Rican government declared a national emergency and released the equivalent of \$1.5 million to hire equipment to repair highways.

Meanwhile, Cesar claimed another two lives in Panama further south.

Guatemala has also felt the impact of the storm — with a dozen communities cut off by heavy rains and landslides Monday — but there were no reports of loss of life or serious damage.

Over 30,000 Christians rally in south Philippines against Muslim peace deal

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (AFP) — More than 30,000 Christians held rallies in three key southern Philippine cities Tuesday to protest a proposed peace deal with Muslim rebels.

President Fidel Ramos, who was visiting a southern town near one of the protest sites, called on the Christian majority to "heal old wounds," referring to the bloody sectarian strife that has wracked the country's southern region for more than two decades.

"Thousands of lives have been lost and thousands more have been dislocated because of our failure to accommodate each other as members of the same Filipino family," Mr. Ramos said in a speech in the

southern city of Dapitan.

He said the "time has come for us to make peace among ourselves and unite for the greater goal of socio-economic development."

But the president's call seemed lost to opponents of a Muslim-led regional council that will supervise development projects in 14 southern provinces.

The council is deemed central to a peace agreement with the main Muslim rebel group, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), as it will pave the way for the creation within three years of a wider autonomous region demanded by the MNLF in exchange for dropping its 24-year armed struggle.

More than 20,000 farm-

ers, students, civic leaders and businessmen rallied in this southern port city, burning an effigy of Mr. Ramos and other officials, police said. Transportation and businesses ground to a halt for three hours but there were no reports of any violence.

In the city of Iligan, about 10,000 protesters, wearing red shirts and ribbons to symbolise their anger, gathered at a public square demanding the suspension of the signing of the final peace agreement, scheduled within the next two months.

The rally in Iligan was preceded by a transport strike that forced officials to call off classes.

Following Sen. Dole's first Hollywood speech, he was criticised for singling out some films both for praise and condemnation without actually seeing them. His trip to see Independence Day was designed to avoid that criticism this time.

Sen. Dole badly needs to spark a similar response to inject some life into his flagging campaign. He trails President Clinton by up to 20 percentage points in opinion polls and by 27 points in one recent poll in California.

However, it remains to be seen whether Sen. Dole can elicit the same response twice.

Business

Suez Canal
Baghdad on

Japanese
bank lends
\$550m
loan for
Qatari gas
project

DAJAN
JEWELLERS

FOR RENT
3 bedrooms apartment in
Simeon - Second floor
220 sq. m.
3 bedrooms - A. Rabe
area - 190 sq. m.
Abdoun Real Estate
Tel: 810505 - 810609
Fax: 810520

Happy Days
Patisserie
Soups & Salads Cafe
OPEN DAILY FROM
10 A.M. - 1 A.M.
Tel. 857199
Fax 898537
Umm Uthman
behind San Roca
Hotel

World News



Russian soldiers prepare equipment at one of the biggest bases in Chechnya, just east of Grozny, where the federal forces are headquartered. Fighting has flared again in the rebel region and a reported attack on the separatist military commander has cast further doubt on the chances for peace (Reuter photo)

Chechens, Russians trade accusations after attack

GROZNY, Russia (R) — Chechen separatists and Russian officials traded charges Tuesday over who was to blame for an assassination attempt on rebel chief-of-staff and top military negotiator Aslan Maskhadov.

"For the Chechen side it is absolutely obvious that the (Russian) Federal Security Service (FSB) was directly involved in the attack on Maskhadov," chief rebel spokesman, Movladi Udugov, told Reuters by telephone.

But ITAR-TASS news agency quoted Russia's military commander in the region and a spokesman for the state commission on Chechnya as denying that Russia had anything to do with the attack, which took place Monday when gunmen opened fire on Mr. Maskhadov's car.

The silver-haired rebel, one of the few separatist fighters regarded by Moscow as an acceptable negotiating partner, was not hurt in the attack. But one of his bodyguards was wounded in the firefight which followed.

The Russian spokesman, Sergei Slipchenko, said the attack was carried out by fighters of radical field commander Salman Raduyev, who oppose any peace talks with Moscow.

Mr. Udugov said the body of one attacker, found later in nearby woods, was that of a Chechen man known to the rebels as an "active collaborator with the FSB."

He dismissed reports blaming the "irreconcilable"



Russian military medical staff inspect the body of a 19-year-old soldier from Russia's Interior Ministry troops in Grozny. The soldier was killed near a checkpoint in central Grozny Monday (Reuter photo)

part of the separatist forces for the attack.

A ceasefire agreed in May between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Chechen rebel leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev has collapsed and there have been heavy casualties in recent weeks.

More than 30,000 people, mostly civilians, have been killed since Mr. Yeltsin sent troops in December 1994 to crush the Caucasus region's bid for independence.

International mediator Tim Guldemann has been working to restart peace talks.

Mr. Guldemann, head of the Chechnya mission of

the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, has been trying to arrange a meeting between Maskhadov and Russian General Anatoly Kvashnin, commander of the North Caucasus Military District.

But the talks have proved hard to organise, with Russian forces pinning down rebels in southern mountain areas and each side deeply suspicious of the other.

Mr. Guldemann said Tuesday he had heard about the attack on Mr. Maskhadov but could not say if it might affect plans for a meeting.

Interfax News Agency said Russia's State Commission on Chechnya

would meet Tuesday to review the situation and two of its members would fly to the region after the meeting.

Russia's military said two servicemen were killed in the last 24 hours when their armoured car hit a mine near the southern Chechen village of Borzoi.

Mr. Udugov said Russian aviation had bombed villages in the southern Shatoi region.

He said 15 civilians had been killed and fighting was still going on between separatists and Russian forces near the southwestern settlement of Bunut which houses a former Soviet missile base.

61 bodies of missing fishermen found

DHAKA (AFP) — Rescue teams in southern coastal areas of Bangladesh have recovered the bodies of 61 out of 132 fishermen reported missing in the Bay of Bengal after their trawlers were hit by a storm last week, local reports and police said Tuesday.

"So far 61 bodies have been recovered scattered along the coast," a local official said by telephone from southern Barisal district.

He said decomposed bodies were slowly turning up on the coast.

A radio report said 17 trawlers carrying the fishermen went missing in a 24-hour period beginning Thursday night during a seasonal storm.

The official Bangladesh news agency (BSS), quoting police, said the bodies were recovered after extensive searches during the past three days along the coastal belt and rescuers were still looking for the 60 listed as missing.

Eleven men were rescued after 15 hours in the turbulent sea, the agency said.

"It is the first time in many years that we have lost so many fishermen at one time ... but they are to be blamed for their fate," said M. Shahidullah Mia, Patuakhali district administrative chief.

He said the trawlers capsize regularly in such weather and most fishermen return after several days, saying they were rescued by other boats.

The frequency of such incidents was attributed by Mr. Mia to the younger generation of fishermen who ignore weather warnings, adding "sometimes I personally tried to convince them after getting calls from the prime minister's office in Dhaka, but they have their way."

Local officials said the fishing villages were in mourning as the search for others continued amid heavy rains and rough seas.

Fishermen are regularly the victims of Bangladeshi seasonal storms. In June, 12 fishermen died when two boats capsized in a storm in the same vicinity. In May, a severe cyclonic storm flooded several coastal villages, swept away a girl and caused widespread crop losses.

The most recent storms have also been responsible for massive flooding which killed 27 by official count, with unofficial tolls as high as 105. Those numbers do not include the fishermen.

Discrepancies in the death tolls could be due to the fact that reports often take some time to reach major towns.

According to relief ministry officials, more than 5.2 million people in more than half of Bangladesh's 64 administrative districts have been affected by flooding, an annual problem during the monsoon season for this low-lying south Asian country.

Last year floods killed 117, people, according to an official count.

Aid volunteers on alert in flood-hit N. Korea

BEIJING (R) — Hundreds of thousands of volunteers in flood-hit North Korea were on alert Tuesday after weathermen predicted more torrential rains would soon hit the hungry hermit nation, aid workers in Pyongyang said.

Floods caused by "unprecedented" rain had this month killed many people in North Korea, causing serious damage to a nation still reeling from devastating floods last year, official media in the isolated Communist state reported Monday.

"The weather forecast is bad: Two to three days of heavy rain," said Geoff Dennis, representative to North Korea of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

"The forecast is for the rain to start this afternoon ... it's being taken very seriously," Mr. Dennis said by telephone from Pyongyang.

The 300,000 volunteers of the North Korean Red Cross had been put on alert to prepare for possible evacuation and rescue work among the country's hungry populace, and to help provide early warning of possible flooding, he said.

The alert came after Pyongyang meteorologists advised the nation on state television to prepare for major flooding.

In an unusually full report Monday, the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said rains in some areas this month had caused even more damage than flooding last year that sent the reclusive nation of 22 million sliding toward famine.

KCNA portrayed a country in crisis, with road and rail bridges washed away, homes destroyed, crops ruined, power lines down and factories silenced. It said loss of life had been heavy but gave no details.

Dennis said he was unable to confirm the KCNA report.

"Through the Red Cross, we haven't heard of anybody killed. The damage from flooding is not substantial at the moment," he said, but added the danger from new rains was considerable.

While officials had repaired many of the more than 100 dams destroyed by floods last year, much of the irrigation system remained in poor shape, he said.

Last year's floods, the worst for a century, wiped out much of the harvest, pushing hundreds of thousands of people to the brink of starvation.

Without ditches and reservoirs to contain floodwaters, the threat to this year's crops remained acute, Mr. Dennis said.

Burundi army admits killing 51 rebels

BUJUMBURA (AFP) — The Burundian army Tuesday admitted officially that it had killed 51 Hutu rebels during various clashes Friday in Giheta, in the central province of Gitega.

The killings took place the day after the minority Tutsi-dominated army backed a coup overthrowing President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, a Hutu, and installing Pierre Buyoya, a Tutsi major.

"Members of armed gangs clashed with the army after setting fire to several buildings," army spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Isidore Nibizi told AFP.

The term "armed gangs" is used by the army to describe Hutu rebels.

Col. Nibizi said the victims had already been buried, adding that tensions in the troubled province had now eased.

On Monday, sources in Nairobi said around 50 people had been killed in separate incidents in Gitega, near the site of a massacre of more than 300 Tutsis, mainly women and children, 10 days ago.

Some reports have estimated the death toll from Friday's attacks could be as high as 150.

Tens of thousands of people have been killed in three years of inter-ethnic bloodletting between the Hutus, who make up 85 per cent of Burundi's 5.5 million people, and the minority Tutsis.

Meanwhile, Maj. Buyoya left Bujumbura Tuesday to confer with President Yoweri Museveni in Uganda and then go on to a Wednesday summit of regional leaders in the northern Tanzanian town of Arusha, state radio reported.

The radio said he would explain the reasons behind his bloodless coup last Thursday and seek the regional leaders' support, but his welcome was uncertain.

The regional leaders and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) did not invite him to the summit, and they — along with the rest of the world — still recognise ousted President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya as head of state.

Mr. Ntibantunganya, a Hutu, was still holed up Tuesday in the residence of the U.S. ambassador in Bujumbura.

He sought refuge there last week — two days before the coup — after enraged Tutsis threw stones at him during a funeral for some 330 victims of a massacre by Hutu guerrillas.

The guerrillas have been fighting troops of the Tutsi-dominated army since October 1993, when Tutsi soldiers assassinated Melchior Ndadaye. Burundi's first Hutu president.

Most of the victims in what has now become a civil war are villagers, with both sides committing massacres.

he would announce a transitional government of national unity on Tuesday or Wednesday, but observers said that could be delayed by his attendance at the one-day summit.

The OAU and most of the governments in the region condemned the coup with vigour, but condemnation in Western capitals and at the United Nations was muted, in large part because of Mr. Buyoya's track record in restoring democracy to Burundi.

An army officer, he seized power in 1987, but called elections in 1993 which he contested but lost to Mr. Ndadaye.

Mr. Museveni is considered the "godfather" of the Tutsis in Rwanda who won that neighbouring country's three-month civil war in 1994 after Hutu extremists had slaughtered more than 500,000 men, women and children.

Many of the Rwandan Tutsis, living in exile in Uganda after ethnic clashes, had served as guerrillas with Museveni and in his army after he seized power in Uganda in 1986.

The ethnic mix in Rwanda and Burundi is virtually identical.

Mr. Museveni nevertheless condemned Maj. Buyoya's coup strongly, and joined Tanzanian President Benjamin Mkapa in calling for Wednesday's regional summit.

A regional summit in Arusha on June 25 decided to send a peacekeeping force to Burundi, requested by Mr. Ntibantunganya and his Tutsi prime minister, Antoine Nduwayo, who acknowledged that they could not contain the violence.

But they were denounced as traitors on their return to Bujumbura, and extremists warned that the arrival of foreign soldiers would spark full-scale civil war.

Maj. Buyoya said his government would be composed essentially of civilians from both tribes, but all Hutu politicians have rejected his overtures and called for his overthrow.

A number of ousted ministers are in hiding in the French, Belgian, German and other embassies.

Jean Minani, president of the Hutu-dominated Front for Democracy in Burundi, Mr. Ntibantunganya's party, said he was prepared to fight the new regime "with all means." He was on his way to Arusha Tuesday for talks with the leaders attending the summit, from Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Zaire, Ethiopia and the OAU.

In a separate development, the U.S. embassy Burundi's new leader Pierre Buyoya met with ousted President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya Sunday, four days after a military-backed coup, the U.S. embassy said Tuesday.

The meeting was organised by the U.S. ambassador, Morris Hughes, but details of the discussions have not been made public.

The embassy source said he did not know whether Mr. Ntibantunganya would go to the summit of regional leaders in Arusha to discuss the Burundi crisis.

Jakarta tense on rumours of unrest, but peaceful

JAKARTA (R) — A jittery Jakarta was hit by rumours about new disturbances Tuesday, spreading panic and forcing some shops and businesses to close early, but the city was calm, witnesses said.

Troops and police were out in force in the Kota area of north Jakarta after rumours that supporters of the ousted leader of the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), Megawati Sukarnoputri, would stage protests.

Police ordered onlookers to disperse as soldiers armed with assault rifles stood by, witnesses said. Many shops in the area closed their shutters early, but traffic remained busy.

Police said the city was calm and there were no protests or riots reported anywhere.

"We heard there are protests here, but I don't see anything," said a local resident in Kota.

Rumours in the afternoon of a planned protest or fresh disturbances created panic after Saturday's riots, which

residents said was the worst violence seen in Jakarta for over two decades.

Similar rumours had also swept through the city Monday, but were unfounded.

Jakarta shares dropped sharply Tuesday afternoon on the rumours, brokers said. The composite index was down over 1.5 per cent to 531.27 points by mid-afternoon as nervous investors unloaded stocks, brokers said. It later recovered marginally to close at 533.48 points, down 1.34 per cent.

Saturday's flare-up began after police stormed and took over the PDI headquarters from activists loyal to Ms. Megawati, daughter of Indonesia's late founding President Sukarno.

Ms. Megawati was ousted as PDI leader by government-backed rebels in June. Her supporters had barricaded themselves within the party headquarters for over a month before they were evicted, having refused to give it up to the rival faction.

the United States expressed their concern at events in Indonesia.

"We're seriously disturbed by the use of violence to end what had been a peaceful assembly," U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

In Canberra, Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer told reporters Monday: "We are obviously concerned to see the degree of unrest that has taken place there and we hope that the situation will settle down very quickly."

Both Downer and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher were in Jakarta last week along with foreign ministers from 18 other nations and the European Union for the ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) regional forum meeting.

Political analysts have said the raid on the PDI headquarters, which took place two days after the meeting ended, had been carefully timed.

'LBJ bugged Nixon and even White House bed'

NEW YORK (R) — U.S. President Lyndon Johnson was so obsessed with secretly taping people that he even bugged the White House bed, although he insisted that President John F. Kennedy started the practice, according to a new book by Richard Nixon.

In a new book released Monday, Nixon Off The Record, an account of the former president's private conversations written by aide Monica Crowley, Nixon is quoted as saying LBJ also secretly bugged Nixon's campaign plane in the 1968 election along with the plane of his running mate Spiro Agnew.

Nixon, whose own presidency came apart in the Watergate scandal amid revelations he secretly taped recorded his Oval Office conversations, told Ms. Crowley that LBJ "used the kind of tactics they always criticised me for using to sandbag my 1968 campaign. Johnson had Agnew's plane bugged (and FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover told me later that Johnson had my campaign plane bugged as well.)"

Asked if he knew that at

the time, Nixon told Ms. Crowley, "no, of course not. But I should have guessed. Johnson was so obsessed with that recording crap."

He said he would never forget the day he visited LBJ at the White House after winning the 1968 election. He was taken into the president's bedroom to be shown "the recording devices that Kennedy had installed under the beds."

"Johnson got down on the floor, lifted the bedspreads and waved his hand under the bed. 'Dick,' he said, 'they are voice activated.'"

Nixon called it an unbelievable scene and added that Johnson "was the one who told me to save every scrap of paper I so much as dribbled on as president."

"Johnson was obsessed with recording everything. He had every room taped. We know what my problems were with that crap, but Kennedy was the one to put it in and Johnson worshipped it," Nixon said.

A portion of the book was published last week by New Yorker magazine, centering on Nixon's rela-

tionship with President Bill Clinton. Nixon called Mr. Clinton "a selfish spoiled brat" for avoiding service in the Vietnam War.

But he praised Mr. Clinton for seeking his advice when he became president and for inviting him back to the White House for the first time since he resigned the office in 1974.

Nixon, who died in 1994, had high hopes Bob Dole would win the Republican presidential nomination and then the White House because he saw Sen. Dole as the type of Republican he was — "a smart, savvy, responsible moderate," according to Ms. Crowley.

In a nine-page memo he sent Sen. Dole in 1993, he advised the Kansan to pick "a heavyweight" as his running mate such as former South Carolina Gov. Carroll Campbell, Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson and former Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander.

He also said Sen. Dole should maintain a good relationship with the party's religious right but not allow them to dictate

his policies. He said Sen. Dole should be conservative on economic issues but compassionate on welfare and health care.

Nixon also had little respect for Ross Perot, saying he thought the Texas billionaire "wasn't keep his word and he doesn't say what he means. ... Perot is just a demagogue."

Nixon also did not like Kennedy as president, saying, "his conduct of ... West relations was disastrous. He was right to end the first combat ... to Vietnam, but the gradualist approach (Secretary of Defence Robert) McNamara advised was horrendous. All he did was make a mess of things."

He also said, "The Kennedys were not admirable people. They simply weren't nice. ... Bobby was the worst."

Ms. Crowley served as Nixon's foreign policy aide for the last four years of his life. She secretly made notes of their conversations as soon as they were completed, but did not tape them.

It occurred to me in Flamin games

Features

High Third World birth rates dominate world population picture

THE POPULATION of the world's developing countries — 80 per cent of the global total — continues to increase at record levels. The potential effect of developing countries' birth rates can be quite dramatic. If, for example, their birth rates remained constant at the present level, purely mathematical projections would put world population at more than 100 billion at the end of the next century and at some 700 billion by 2150. Such uncontrolled population growth — based on today's birth rates — would certainly lead to food shortages, epidemics and civil strife.

Current birth rates, however, mask the even faster growth that would have occurred had fertility not decreased in many countries. "The acceptance of family planning by many women in developing countries has been the key to slowing the postwar explosion of world population," said demographer Carl Haub during a press conference at the National Press Club. "But birth rates in developing countries remain at twice the level needed to stabilise world population size at some point in the future," he observed.

The Washington-based Population Reference Bureau (PRB) released today its annual overview of global numbers, the 1996 edition of the World Population Data Sheet. PRB is a non-profit, educational

organisation dedicated to the dissemination of accurate and up-to-date information on population trends and their implications. Its annual assessment examines the latest trends in birth and death rates in every country, producing a global "report card" on the current demographic situation.

In mid-1996, world population reached 5,771,000,000 (or 5.8 billion). At the current pace, it will reach the sixth billion as soon as 1999, after having passed the 5 billion mark as recently as 1987.

"This pace of population growth serves as a very real warning that birth rates must come down if a rapid multiplication in human numbers is to be avoided," observed Haub and Machiko Yanagishita, the Data Sheet's authors. Population size stabilisation will ultimately take place after couples worldwide average two children each.

"If current birth rates do not come down, then we will soon be adding several billions to world population every 10 years. While this may seem an unimaginable scenario, it would be a mathematical certainty. There have been notable declines in birth rates, particularly in some countries of Asia and Latin America. But, as long as couples in developing countries continue to average well over two children each, the rapid explosion in world population growth foreseen decades ago will occur.

Only rising death rates from factors such as famines would deter an unsustainable population of several hundreds of billions. That is certainly not the way we would wish to see population growth stabilise."

Other findings from this year's Data Sheet:

— The effect of AIDS in Africa will likely be far greater than has been thought. Research conducted by the International Program on the Global Impact of AIDS at the U.S. Bureau of the Census indicates that AIDS may have a devastating effect in particular countries. The reduction in population size for Africa as a whole, however, would be much more modest.

— Population growth in the industrialised countries has effectively ended for the foreseeable future. This includes the states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, where birth rates had been comparatively high prior to the early 1990s. In Europe, couples now average only 1.5 children per woman. This will lead to significant economic challenges as the populations of these countries "age" as a result of the low birth rate.

— Africa's very high birth rates — about six children per woman on average — give the region enormous population potential 30 years after the world population "explosion" gained popular attention. If African fertility remained

constant at today's level, it would be on a course to pass the 400 billion mark about 125 years from now. As unlikely as such high projections obviously are, that, again, is the mathematical result. Even assuming different downward trends in birth rate declines over the next 50 years, its ultimate population size would vary from 1.2 to almost 8 billion. Such enormous population growth will greatly tax Africa's development opportunities and its government's ability to cope.

— Two huge population question marks exist, China and India. China's very low fertility, only 1.8 children per woman, has been gained because of its controversial government population programme. If democratic processes replace the central, authoritarian government, many analysts wonder if the birth rate would not rise in this traditional, still largely rural society. Should that occur, major alterations to population projections would be needed. In India, a three-decade effort to reduce the birth rate has been moderate success as Indian women now average about 3.4 children each. It appears, however, that it will be more difficult to continue to lower fertility to the national goal of two children per woman.

Population Reference Bureau, Inc.

World Population Clock, 1996

	World	Developed Countries	Developing Countries
Population:	5,770,984,000	1,170,777,000	4,600,187,000
Births per:			
Year	139,845,581	13,579,179	126,266,401
Month	11,653,798	1,131,598	10,522,200
Week	2,689,338	281,138	2,408,200
Day	383,139	37,203	345,935
Hour	15,964	1,550	14,414
Minute	266	26	240
Second	4.4	0.4	4.0
Deaths per:			
Year	52,177,492	11,959,158	40,218,334
Month	4,348,124	996,597	3,351,528
Week	1,003,413	229,984	773,430
Day	142,952	32,765	110,187
Hour	5,958	1,365	4,591
Minute	99	23	77
Second	1.7	0.4	1.3
Natural Increase per:			
Year	87,668,089	1,620,021	86,048,067
Month	7,305,674	135,002	7,170,672
Week	1,685,925	31,154	1,654,771
Day	240,187	4,438	235,748
Hour	10,008	185	9,823
Minute	167	3	164
Second	2.8	0.1	2.7
Infant Deaths per:			
Year	8,889,244	123,110	8,766,134
Month	724,104	10,259	713,845
Week	167,101	2,368	164,733
Day	23,806	337	23,489
Hour	992	14	978
Minute	17	0.2	16
Second	0.3	0.0	0.3

Source: 1996 World Population Data Sheet, Population Reference Bureau, Inc.

Internet, PC ready to dethrone television

By Isabel Parente
Agence France-Presse

BURLINGAME, California — The personal computer and the Internet could dethrone television within 10 years as a medium for communications and entertainment, according to the top executive of Intel Corp. Andrew Grove, president and chief executive of the leading semiconductor manufacturer, told a symposium here that PCs may supplant televisions by 2005 if their makers successfully exploit the Internet's vast multimedia potential.

"The power of the Internet is impossible to overestimate — yet it so far has provided an underwhelming experience in terms of rich multimedia," Mr. Grove has said.

"Yet the tools exist today to meet PC users' expectations for compelling visual and audio elements and to fulfill the promise of the Internet as a medium for communications, social interaction, and entertainment."

Mr. Grove said Intel forecasts show PCs will be used for four billion hours annually by 2005, compared with three billion hours for television.

As soon as next year, Mr. Grove predicted, PCs will be widely used for communicating by videophone, working at home and creating "digital personal creations," incorporating video, photographs and three-dimensional drawings.

Mr. Grove warned that the demand for PCs will grow only "providing there

is powerful content" to the new medium, a mission entrusted to software designers rather than PC makers.

He added that new programmes will have to include the versatility and local storage capability of the high performance connected PC with the interactivity of the Internet.

But PCs themselves may be threatened by new machines — Internet terminals — whose sole function is Internet access, and whose price is one-fourth that of the PC.

As the Internet pulls in an estimated one million new users per month, competition over potential new customers is fierce, and the new machines' simplicity and reduced cost appeal to customers.

Intel's response to the

challenge rests in part on digital video discs (DVDs) which have eight times other disks' storage capacity, and allow users to access the Internet without leaving the application in which they are working.

Intel demonstrated the new technology, which consisted of music videos, interviews and the concert dates of American recording artist Keb Mo.

Via the Internet, Mr. Grove then called Keb Mo on videophone.

Attending the conference were top executives from software and hardware companies, film, television, music, publishing, and advertising firms and communications infrastructure and service providers.

By Tim Farrand
Reuters

LONDON — Foreign visitors to Britain's pubs are so baffled by the unwritten laws of bar etiquette that brewers have published a guidebook on the dos and don'ts of round-buying, darts and chatting-up the opposite sex.

Tourists find the art of buying a drink, often involving bizarre silent rituals, one of the hardest things to get right, the brewers and licensed retailers association says.

"There are strict rules of etiquette involved in attracting the attention of bar staff. The ritual procedure is best described as a sort of subtle pantomime," says author and anthropologist Kate Fox.

"When you achieve your goal of making eye contact with the barman, a quick lift of the eyebrows and upward jerk of the chin, accompanied by a hopeful smile, will let him know that you are waiting," says Ms. Fox in her guide, "Passport to the Pub".

There are certain things no tourist should try if he wants to remain friends with the natives.

You shouldn't jump the invisible queue, call out, snap your fingers or glare at the barstaff. Don't ring the bell — often attached to the wall at the end of the bar — because this is used by the publican or bar staff to signal last orders.

Last orders are called when there are 10 minutes left before the pub closes. Most of the tourists interviewed for the book found the whole pub experience bewildering.

One Dutch visitor

expressed the views of many: "I cannot understand how the British ever manage to buy themselves a drink."

Many visitors drop into a pub searching for the "real Britain", perhaps brought up on tales of wizened locals leaning on crooks with a faithful dog at their feet, oak floorboards warped with age and the leisurely tick-tock of a grandfather clock accompanying the clack-clack of a game of dominoes.

Ms. Fox says you should not expect strict justice in the round buying ritual. One person may end up buying two rounds in a "session" while others have only bought one round each.

"Many visitors drop into a pub searching for the real Britain, perhaps brought up on tales of wizened locals leaning on crooks with a faithful dog at their feet, oak floorboards warped with age and the leisurely tick-tock of a grandfather clock accompanying the clack-clack of a game of dominoes."

a game of dominoes.

That sort of country bar is hard to find nowadays but the pub remains a central part of British life and culture. "If you haven't been to a pub, you haven't seen Britain," says Ms. Fox.

Pub-going is by far the most popular pastime — the 61,000 pubs in Britain have over 25 million loyal customers.

More than three quarters of the adult population go

to pubs and one third are regulars, visiting the pub at least once a week.

If a foreigner becomes a regular he must remember life was not meant to be fair when it comes to buying rounds of drinks.

Ms. Fox says you should not expect strict justice in the round buying ritual. One person may end up buying two rounds in a "session" while others have only bought one round each.

Pub talk — "If you are the sort of person who likes conversation to proceed in an orderly manner, you will find the rambling, haphazard, free-association type of pub talk very frustrating."

Women should also bear in mind that "if you accept the offer of a drink from a native (male or female), etiquette requires you to chat with them for at least as long as it takes to consume the drink."

"So, if you feel at all uncomfortable with someone, do not accept the offer. Do remember however, that the offer is not, in itself, a sexual invitation," Ms. Fox says.

But perhaps the most important piece of advice is for men, who still make up the majority of pub regulars.

"The most important male binding ritual is the argument. If you want to get closer to your native male companions, do not attempt a heart to heart conversation."

"Instead, start an argument. If it gets a bit heated, buy a round."

The mysteries of pub

Women worth 25 per cent less than men — ILO

GENEVA (AFP) — Women work longer hours than men do, but earn on average 25 per cent less, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) says in a report out Tuesday.

This is despite the fact that more women today fill jobs that used to be traditionally male domains, the U.N. agency says in "More and Better Jobs for Women: An Action Guide."

"While more and more women are working, the great majority of them are simply swelling the ranks of the working poor," said Lin Lim, who prepared the nearly 200-page report.

"Women's economic activities remain highly concentrated in low-wage, low-productivity and precarious forms of employment," she said.

Women represent 70 per cent of the world's poor and 65 per cent of its one billion illiterates, the report says.

More than 45 per cent of women aged 15 through 64 work, representing more than half of the working population in industrial countries, compared with 37 per cent in western Europe and 30 per cent in the United States 20 years ago.

These are the major findings of the report, which follows up on last year's

International Women's Conference in Beijing and a 1995 world summit on social issues in Copenhagen.

Outside agriculture, women earn by average only three-quarters of what men are paid for the same work; that is, 25 per cent less — a gap that is found in both industrialised and developing countries.

Unemployment among women is 50 to 100 per cent greater in several industrialised countries, making women the principal victims of the economic downturn of the 1990s.

Women hold only six per cent of senior management jobs in the world.

In North America, Europe and Japan, two times more women than men joined the active workforce between 1980 and 1990.

In South East Asia, women represent up to 80 per cent of workers in export-oriented industries.

Their relatively cheap labour has represented the cornerstone of export-oriented industrialisation and international competitiveness for many developing countries," said ILO Director General Michel Hansenne.

The study notes, however,

the progress that women have made in recent years, particularly in developed countries.

There is a marked trend towards more women in executive, management, technical and administrative jobs. Some have even reached the pinnacles of their profession.

In the United States, women are more likely than men to start their own businesses.

Equal-pay laws have been enacted in both industrialised and developing countries, and working conditions have been improved so that women can better balance their professional and family roles.

Women are joining labour unions in greater numbers, and collective bargaining has contributed to promoting sexual equality in many countries.

But Mr. Hansenne noted: "Equality of opportunity and treatment for women in employment has yet to be achieved anywhere in the world."

The ILO expects that women will represent the same percentage of the workforce as men in several industrialised countries by 2000.

In developing countries, they will account for 31 per

cent, but their role is nevertheless on the rise.

The growing number of working women in industrialised countries is due in large part to part-time work. In the 28 countries that make up the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), women fill 65 to 90 per cent of such jobs.

Outside the OECD, they are by and large working in the underground economy, being paid less and lacking social security.

Although more women were entering the global labour market, they ran a higher risk of unemployment and had had little success in mounting the ladder to top management posts, according to the new ILO report.

In many richer countries, women's unemployment rates ran from 50 to 100 per cent more than for men.

The ILO said there had been a surge of women entering the labour force in the richer countries of the North and in the poor and developing countries of the South.

In the OECD countries — including the United States and the 15 nations of the European Union — women worked at least two hours a week more than men, and

often five to 10 hours more.

In an introduction to the report, Mr. Hansenne said "their willingness to give up home and family to become migrant workers has greatly increased some countries' foreign exchange earnings."

The report said women had made some real gains, especially in the richer countries as well as in Latin America and the Caribbean, with a strong trend upwards from a low starting point in their representation in managerial and professional jobs.

But overall, said Mr. Hansenne, equality of treatment for women in employment has yet to be achieved anywhere in the world.

"Relative to men, women still face unequal hiring standards, unequal opportunities for training and retraining, unequal access to productive resources, segregation and concentration in a narrow range of 'female' sectors and occupations," he pointed out.

They also faced "unequal pay for equal work, unequal participation in economic decision-making, unequal sharing of family responsibilities, unequal career prospects and greater likelihood of being unemployed and of being poor."

Palestinians lose \$7million a day from Israeli closure

SANAA (R) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat said that Israel's closure of Palestinian self-rule territories caused losses of up to \$7 million a day.

"We are losing \$6 (million) to \$7 million a day as a result of the Israeli blockade on the Palestinians," Mr. Arafat said in a news conference in Yemen late Monday.

"The amount is larger than the assistance we received or were promised from the international community. If the Israelis con-

tinue their current slogans peace faces a dilemma. Peace is not a Palestinian demand but an Israeli need," he said.

Israel imposed a closure of the West Bank and Gaza during a wave of suicide bombings. Tens of thousands of Palestinians once worked in Israel, usually in low-paid construction and agriculture jobs.

Palestinians call the measures, which have devastated the West Bank and Gaza economy, a form of collective punishment.

UAE sees high growth

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) economy is projected to grow by more than five per cent in 1996 due to an upturn in the non-oil sector, its planning minister was quoted as saying.

Sheikh Humaid Ben Ahmad Al Mulla said the gross domestic product (GDP) would increase by 5.6 per cent in 1996 over the previous year.

"The growth will be mainly in the non-oil sector, including the light industries, electricity, water, con-

struction, internal trade and hotel business," he told the economic weekly Emirates Today.

He said strong performance by commercial banks and insurance companies in 1995 indicated a continuation of the economic upswing in the next years.

Sheikh Humaid made no mention of the oil sector, the biggest component of the GDP. But bankers said they expected it to record positive growth rates in 1996 due to an improvement in world crude prices.

Kuwait must cut subsidies, expatriate jobs — World Bank

KUWAIT (R) — The World Bank has advised Kuwait to cut hefty subsidies on electricity and water and reduce the number of foreigners on the state payroll to help bridge its budget deficit by the year 2000, a newspaper said Tuesday.

"A World Bank report on Kuwait's five-year economic and social development plan has strongly recommended a gradual hike in the prices of electricity and water," the English-language Arab Times reported.

It also recommended "a cut in government subsidies on oil products such as fuel, an increase in telecommunications and transport charges by 50 per cent and a slashing of expatriate manpower at the government sector by as much as 45 per cent."

Cabinet Affairs Minister Abdul Aziz Al Dakhil advised the cabinet to

accept the bank's recommendations, the paper said.

Officials have said a lavish cradle-to-grave welfare state that provides Kuwaitis and expatriates with public services free or at minimal cost must be trimmed to balance the budget, but they have been slow to implement reforms.

The bank's reported recommendations restate, albeit in more detailed form, advice it has given Kuwait regularly since the Gulf war ended Iraq's 1990-91 occupation, diplomats say.

Residential customers pay two fils per kilowatt hour for electricity and 800 fils per 1,000 gallons of water, whereas the actual cost to the government is 17 fils and 2.3 dinars respectively. There are 1,000 fils to one dinar.

Foreigners make up about 40 per cent of the 250,000-

strong public sector workforce, according to 1994 figures.

Kuwait projects a deficit of 1.32 billion dinars (\$4.4 billion) on spending of 4.23 billion dinars in the 1995-96 fiscal year that ended on June 30 and plans to eliminate the deficit by the year 2000.

Kuwait's deficit has risen because it spent more than half of its large investment reserves on paying its share of the cost of the war and restoring war-damaged oil industry.

Meanwhile, booming world financial markets boosted Kuwait's foreign assets in 1995, reversing a pattern of decline since the end of the Iraqi occupation, the Central Bank of Kuwait has said.

The rise was reported in 1995 balance of payments figures released by the central bank, which also

showed a 70 per cent rise in the current account surplus to more than \$4 billion.

The government investment account, which mainly reflects the change in the state's foreign assets and is the main component in the capital account, rose in 1995 by 1,196 million dinars (\$4 billion).

The increase "reflects the effects of the boom in the world financial markets" during 1995, the central bank report said.

The rise in 1995 reverses a pattern of decline since the end of the Iraqi invasion in February 1991, with the financial needs for reconstruction one of the main drains on Kuwait's external assets.

These assets, which were rising strongly prior to the invasion, are mainly made up of investments abroad by the state general reserve fund, the Reserve Fund for Future Generations and two state-owned companies,

Kuwait Petroleum Corporation and Kuwait Airways Corporation.

The government does not release figures for the value of these assets, but unofficial estimates put the value at between \$50 billion to

\$60 billion compared with more than \$100 billion before the invasion.

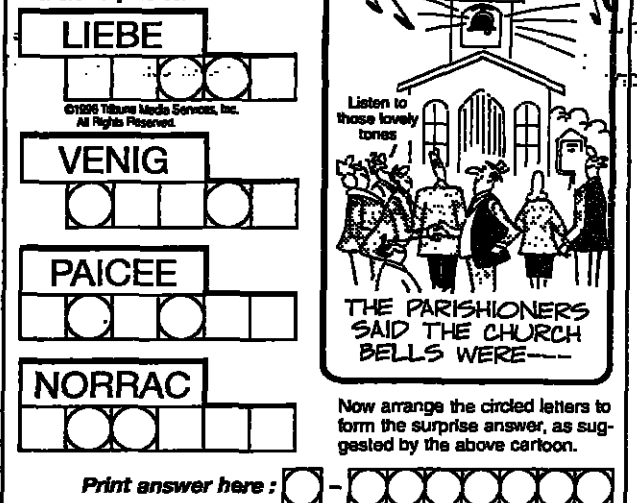
The Kuwaiti government still has reconstruction costs, including repayments on a \$5.5 billion loan raised after the invasion.

THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here: (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ELITE CHOKE MISFIT FAULTY Answer: How the working women adapted to an afternoon of leisure — IT FIT THEM TO A TEA

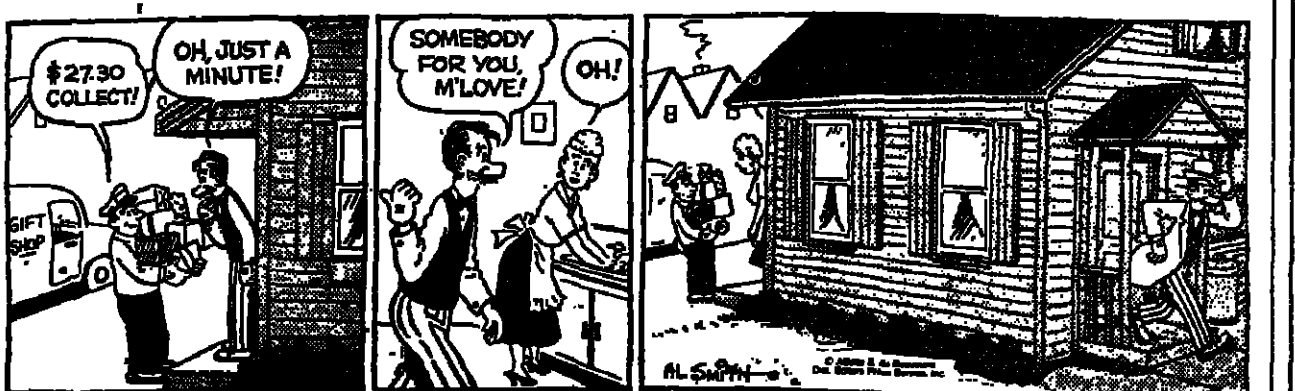
Peanuts



Andy Capp



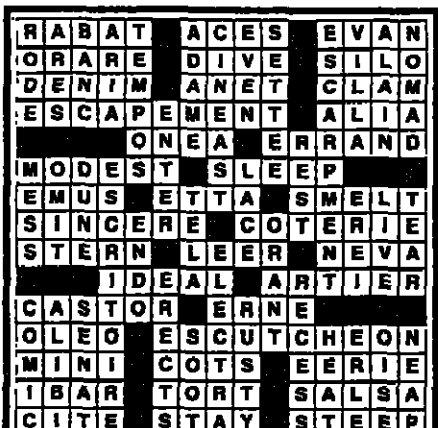
Mutt'n' Jeff



THE Daily Crossword by Matthew Higgins

- ACROSS
- 1 FBI agents
 - 5 More exposed
 - 10 Weight units: abbr.
 - 14 Muse number
 - 15 Eradicate
 - 16 Exclamation of dismay
 - 17 Start of quote by 23A
 - 20 Antique auto
 - 21 Arabian seaport
 - 22 Some musical passages
 - 23 Amy or James
 - 25 NBA's — Gilmore
 - 26 Low grade
 - 27 More of quote 30
 - 30 Abductee of Paris
 - 33 Courtyard
 - 34 Small bill
 - 35 Ugandan tyrant
 - 36 Actress — Leslie
 - 37 Clara Boothe — 38 — gratias
 - 39 Athenian lawmaker
 - 40 Defense system
 - 41 More of quote 43
 - 43 Throng
 - 44 Biblical weeds
 - 45 More of quote 49
 - 49 Motor part
 - 51 — and the King of Siam
 - 53 — de France
 - 54 End of quote 57
 - 57 Ripening factor
 - 58 Take care of
 - 59 Thanks —
 - 60 Paves roads
 - 61 Centers
 - 62 Fast flyers

- DOWN
- 1 Knot
 - 2 Movie actor, Sal
 - 3 Enhance
 - 4 Unused
 - 5 English church officer
 - 6 Comic Johnson
 - 7 Showing
 - 8 Tee preceder
 - 9 Bride
 - 10 Woman lawyer
 - 11 — Name? (1962 hit song)
 - 12 Convex moldings
 - 13 — a Lady (Tom Jones hit)
 - 14 Eddie Van — of music
 - 19 Supp
 - 24 Blissful place
 - 25 Nobel chemist
 - 27 Hank of baseball
 - 28 Peruvian
 - 29 Desideratum
 - 30 Muslim pilgrimage
 - 31 Ostrich kin: var.
 - 32 Circus whip
 - 33 Blanches
 - 36 Consistent
 - 37 Rounded part
 - 39 Sharpen
 - 40 — could eat —
 - 42 Diners
 - 43 Chops into little bits
 - 46 Small glass containers
 - 47 16th century author, Sir Thomas —
 - 48 Takes a break
 - 49 Ella's forte
 - 50 Forum garb
 - 51 Hair style
 - 52 Aene, e.g.
 - 55 Kapak play
 - 56 — Kapitaf



Business

Suez Canal

Baghdad

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Lewis leaps to historic gold as Johnson begins quest

ATLANTA (R) — Carl Lewis leapt to a special place in Olympic history and fellow American Michael Johnson cruised to 400 metres gold on Monday as sports fans put a nightmare bomb blast behind them and enjoyed a vintage night of athletics.

But Saturday's bombing at Atlanta's Olympic park, in which two people died and 110 were injured, continued to cast an ugly shadow over the games, with Atlanta police facing accusations they were slow in reacting to a warning call.

Lewis, 35, soared 8.50 metres to clinch the long jump title and equal two monumental Olympic records — winning a fourth consecutive title in the same athletics event and a ninth gold in any sport.

Johnson, running in gold shoes, set up a unique track double when he raced home unchallenged to win the one-lap race in an Olympic record time of 43.49 seconds. He is hot favourite to add the 200 metres gold on Thursday.

Lewis joins discus thrower Al Oerter, also from the United States, as the only track and field athlete to win gold at four successive games.

He also matched Finnish runner Paavo Nurmi's record of nine Olympic golds.

On a golden night for the host nation, American Allen Johnson won the 110-metre hurdles in 12.95 seconds, also an Olympic record.

France's Marie-Jo Péroche ran the third fastest women's 400 metres ever to retain her Olympic title. The Guadeloupe-born runner clocked 48.25 seconds, yet another Olympic record.

Russia's Svetlana Masterkova sprang a surprise when she claimed the 800 metres, relegating pre-favourite Ana Fidelia Quirot of Cuba and Mozambique's Maria Mutola to second and third respectively.

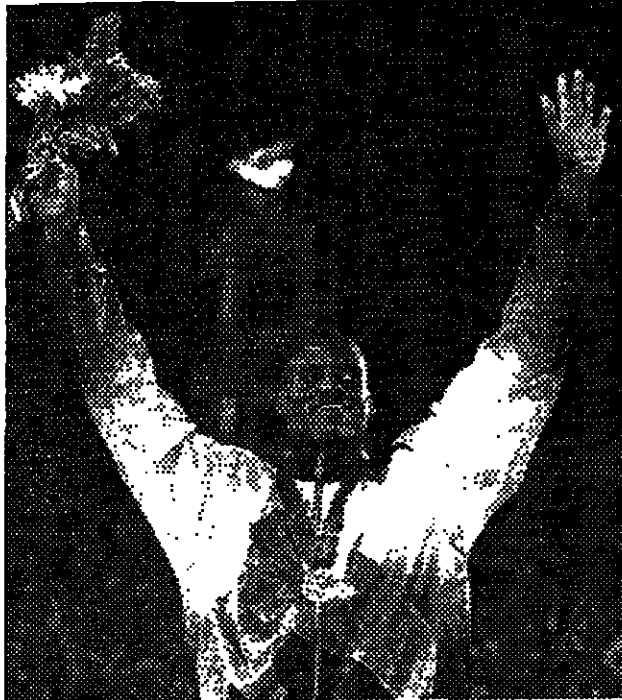
On the tennis court, Yugoslav-born American Monica Seles saw her Olympic dream shattered as three of the top four seeds went out at the quarter-final stage. Seles went down in three sets to Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic.

NBC news reported on Monday that Atlanta police received a bomb warning 10 minutes earlier than they have publicly acknowledged.

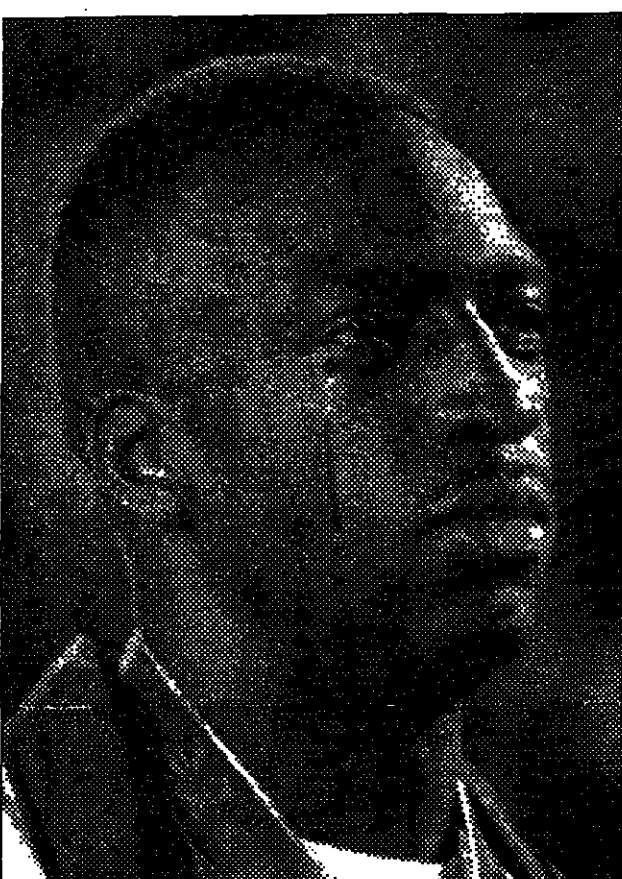
Citing what it called three highly reliable sources, the network said the warning was phoned into Atlanta's 911 emergency number at 12:58 a.m. EDT (0458 GMT) and not 1:08 a.m. (0508 GMT) as reported by Atlanta police.

The report said technical glitches delayed action on the warning, possibly contributing to a higher casualty toll.

The pipe bomb exploded at 1:20 a.m. (0520 GMT).



USA's Carl Lewis celebrates his gold medal victory in the men's long jump with the Olympic flame burning in the background at Olympic Stadium. Lewis won the event with a jump of 8.5 metres and collected his fourth gold medal in Olympic long jump competition (Reuters photo)



Michael Johnson, gold medal winner of the men's 400m race stands with a tear in his eyes during victory ceremony at the Olympic stadium in Atlanta (Reuters photo)

showing revellers with vicious fragments of nails and screws.

Beverly Harvard, the Atlanta police chief, had earlier dismissed suggestions that there had been a lag between the call coming in and action being taken.

The FBI released a transcript of the 11-word warning.

"There is a bomb in centennial park. You have 30 minutes," said the warning, given by someone identified by voice experts as a white American male.

Fulton County Sheriff Jackie Barrett said the fact that the bomb exploded sooner than the warning call had indicated might mean it was designed to lure as many police as possible into the path of the blast.

FBI special agent David Tubbs said investigators were compiling composite sketches of people at the scene of the bombing. But he said they would not be made public soon.

However, French public television briefly showed what it said were police sketches of two suspects. Both were young whites. One was a man but it was impossible to determine whether the second sketch depicted a male or a female.

The park, packed with revellers at the time but closed since the attack, will reopen on Tuesday morning, when civil rights leader and former mayor Andrew Young, an ordained preacher who co-chairs the organising committee, will hold a memorial service.

What they're saying at the Olympics

ATLANTA (AFP) — A selection of quotes from the Olympics:

* "Winning that gold medal really made up for 1992. Everything I went through was worth it" — Michael Johnson after winning the 400m gold and wiping away his failure in Barcelona.

* "I said before the competition began that I would be a very happy man if we could win all the golds and that is still possible. We prepared well for the Olympics and I am very satisfied with our performances so far" — Chinese head table tennis coach Zhang Xuelin after China won the women's doubles and are assured of the men's doubles.

* "If Carl Lewis is still wanting to be the premier athlete of track and field, I think he should step down from that" — Michael Johnson after his 400m victory was overshadowed by Lewis's fourth long jump gold in a row and a record-equaling ninth Olympic title.

* "After all I have been through, this medal feels like gold. I'll run on for a couple more years but no more Olympics" — Ana Fidelia Quirot of Cuba, who was nearly killed in a domestic fire in 1993, after taking the silver in the women's 800m.

* "If Olympic officials think it does something else they should ban it and put

on that list. But according to the Olympic rules they must do that at least six months prior to the games. They simply can't just outlaw it and take away our medals" — Anatoly Kolesov, chief of the Russian delegation, after the IOC stripped two Russian medal winners for taking drugs.

* "It was a proven case of doping and we followed the IOC medical and ethics to the word. Even if bromantan is not on the list of banned drugs it is a closely related substance" — IOC spokeswoman Michele Verdier answering the complaint from Russia. Kolesov remained dissatisfied.

* "I feel great, I got a gold in Los Angeles, silver in Seoul and today the bronze. This is the last competition for me. I gave up some business in Budapest to prepare for these Olympics and now I will go back to that. I am happy with bronze but, of course, gold would have been better but that's life" — Romanian weightlifter Nicu Vlad after winning the bronze in the 108-kilogramme class.

* "I want to win above all for myself. But I also want to show that we too are people who do sport, that we make the same commitment as any other athlete" — Paola Fantato, Italy's wheelchair-bound Olympian, on the archery team competition Friday.

Ukraine's Taimazov adds Olympic gold to world crown

ATLANTA (R) — Timur Taimazov of Ukraine needed just one mighty jerk lift to blow away his opponents and claim gold in the second heavyweight (108-kg) Olympic weightlifting class on Monday.

Taimazov trailed veteran Nicu Vlad, Romania's 1984 champion at 90-kg, and Russian Sergei Syrtsov after the snatch lifts. But his first jerk of 227.5-kg proved too much for his opponents.

The 1994 world champion, who did not compete at all last year, then lifted 236-kg to improve his own jerk record by 0.5 of a kilo.

For Taimazov, the win was doubly satisfying after he went into the 100-kg weight class at the Barcelona Olympics as his favourite but was surpris-

ingly beaten into second place by Russia's Viktor Tregubov.

But for Syrtsov, who has moved up two weight classes since 1992 in his quest for gold, it was the same old story.

In Barcelona he lost on bodyweight to the then dark horse Kakhi Kakhiashvili of Greece, who took gold again on Sunday. In Atlanta he had to settle for silver again.

"I remember how I sat with Sergei in Barcelona after we both came second and we just turned and looked at each other in disbelief," Taimazov said.

"Here he was the only opponent who had the worried. I really feel for him now. It's very tough to win silver. Win gold or nothing."

Taimazov's Ukrainian teammate and reigning world champion Igor Razorenov had to settle for the latter, pulling out with back problems without making a lift.

The bronze medal went to Vlad, who joined only 11 other lifters who have won three Olympic medals.

He also won silver in Seoul in 1988 and would probably have won one in Barcelona had he not been forced on a technicality to lift one class above his weight.

Vlad joined an exodus of east European weightlifters to Australia in 1991 and won four world championship medals in Australian colours but returned to his homeland last year.

I'm still the greatest, says Christie

ATLANTA (R) — Linford Christie boasted he was still the best athlete in the world despite losing his Olympic title after two false starts.

Following his disqualification from the Atlanta 100 metres final, won by Canada's Donovan Bailey in a world record 9.84 seconds, Christie insisted he did not jump the starter's gun.

"I felt that I had the perfect start. I went with the gun," Christie told a news conference.

"I don't stop being the greatest athlete in the world just because I lose one race."

Christie, a 36-year-old grandfather who is set to retire at the end of the season, is Britain's biggest track name.

Olympic silver medalist behind Carl Lewis in 1988, he won the title in 1992, became world champion the following year and has been European champion since 1986.

But he can be a difficult character and his disqualification on Saturday night in front of a full house at the Olympic stadium was vintage Christie — argumentative until the very end.

Gold at last for China's diver Xiong

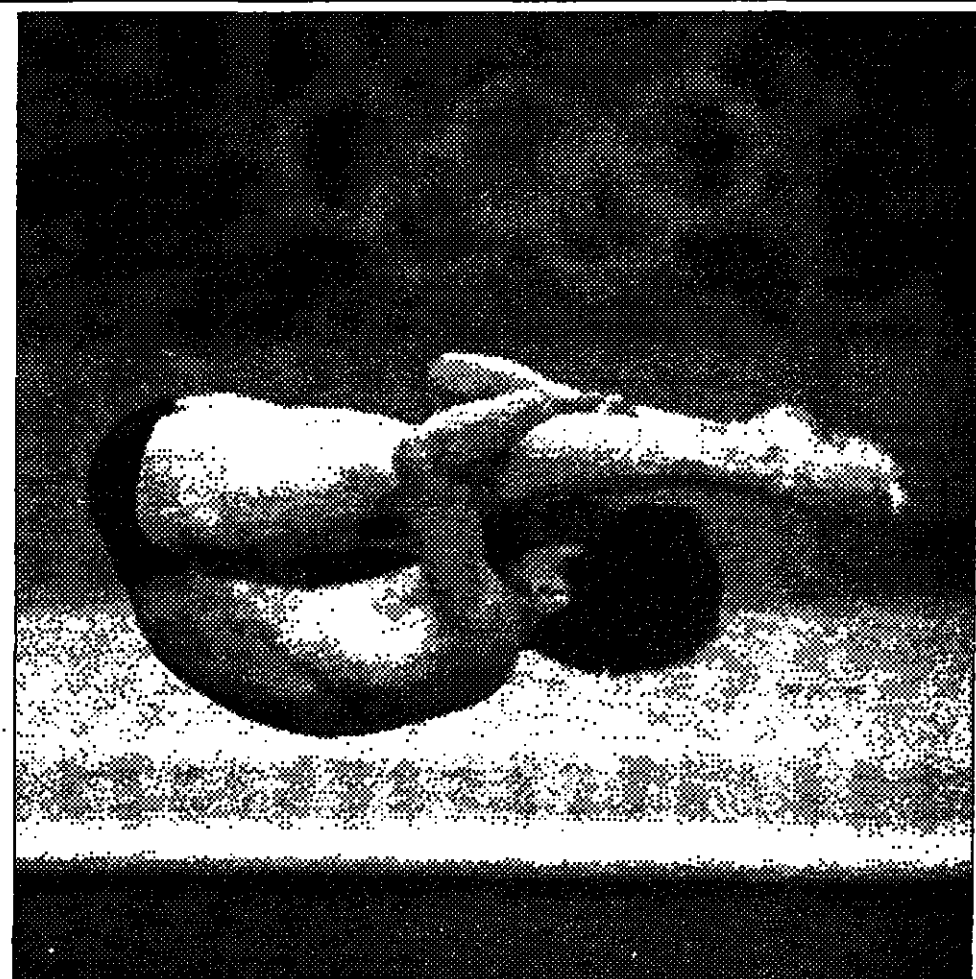
ATLANTA (R) — China's Xiong Ni, denied gold by the great Greg Louganis eight years ago, finally claimed an Olympic crown when he held his nerve to win the men's three-metre springboard title on Monday.

Xiong claimed the only Olympic diving title China had never won and made it two Atlanta golds out of two for his country after Fu Mingxia retained the women's highboard crown on Saturday.

"The gold was fitting reward for Xiong, who took the highboard silver at the 1988 Seoul Olympics — when he was unlucky to be narrowly edged out by American great Louganis — and the bronze at the 1992 Barcelona games. He was also highboard silver medalist at the 1991 world championships.

Xiong, who said he trained for up to 6-1/2 hours a day, has now switched to the springboard. He had to bear world champion Yu Zhuocheng, his Chinese team mate, and defending Olympic champion Mark Lenzi of the U.S. to win.

Lenzi, given loud and enthusiastic support from the



China's Xiong Ni in action as he takes the gold medal in the men's 3 metre springboard diving finals at the Atlanta Olympics (Reuters photo)

home crowd, trailed the two Chinese going into the last round but threw down a tremendous challenge with his final effort, earning 92.40 points — the highest score of the night — for his finely-executed reverse 3-1/2 somersaults with tuck.

Yu overhauled him, scoring 83.16 with his closing reverse 1-1/2 somersaults and 3-1/2 twists, leaving Xiong no margin for error on

the last dive of the competition.

Xiong was equal to the task, nailing his inward 3-1/2 somersaults for a score of 87.72 which gave him a winning total of 701.46 — 231.45 carried over from the morning's five compulsory dives and 470.01 from the evening's six optional.

"China has never won a gold medal in this event at previous Olympics — only

silver. This is our first gold and I'm very very excited," Xiong said.

Yu took the silver with an aggregate 690.93 and Lenzi the bronze with 686.49.

The bronze vindicated Lenzi's decision to return to the sport in 1995 after retiring two years previously. At one stage the American had considered selling his Barcelona gold to pay for flying lessons.

Medals table after the 10th day of competition

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze
United States	24	28	11
Russia	18	13	10
France	13	6	12
China	10	12	8
Germany	10	11	19
Italy	10	6	9
Australia	7	8	16
Poland	6	5	3
Ukraine	5	2	5
Romania	4	5	6
Hungary	4	3	5
Greece	4	3	0
Cuba	3	5	7
S. Korea	3	5	3
Japan	3	4	3
New Zealand	3	2	1
Ireland	3	0	1
Turkey	3	0	1
Switzerland	3	0	0
Canada	2	6	6
Brazil	2	2	4
Belgium	2	2	2
S. Africa	2	0	1
Ethiopia	2	0	0
Belarus	1	4	7
Netherlands	1	3	8
Britain	1	3	5
Kazakhstan	1	3	1
Czech Rep.	1	2	1
Finland	1	2	0
Spain	1	1	2
N. Korea	1	1	1
Denmark	1	0	1
Slovakia	1	0	1
Yugoslavia	1	0	1
Armenia	1	0	0
Costa Rica	1	0	0
Ecuador	1	0	0
Hong Kong	1	0	0
Syria	1	0	0
Bulgaria	0	4	4
Sweden	0	2	1
Jamaica	0	2	0
Kenya	0	2	0
Austria	0	1	1
Norway	0	1	1
Argentina	0	1	0
Croatia	0	1	0
Namibia	0	1	0
Slovenia	0	1	0
Uzbekistan	0	1	0
Georgia	0	0	1
Israel	0	0	1
Mexico	0	0	1
Moldova	0	0	1
Mongolia	0	0	1
Morocco	0	0	1
Mozambique	0	0	1
Nigeria	0	0	1
Trinidad	0	0	1
Uganda	0	0	1

TV's Olympic coverage on Channel 2 for Wednesday

Cycling (men's individual road race)	15:25 - 21:30
Athletics	15:50 - 19:30
Badminton (ladies doubles final)	15:55 - 17:20
Canoeing (500 m heats)	15:55 - 19:30
Badminton (men's doubles final)	17:25 - 19:30
Summary A (Channel 1)	20:00 - 21:20
Boxing quarterfinals	20:25 - 22:50
Archery ladies final	20:35 - 24:00
Canoeing (500m +1000m)	21:25 - 23:50
Freestyle wrestling finals	22:25 - 01:25
Table tennis ladies final	23:25 - 00:45
Athletics finals	00:05 - 05:55
Summary B (Channel 1)	01:15 - 02:15
Boxing quarterfinals	02:55 - 05:25
Diving springboard finals	04:55 - 06:45
Summary C (Channel 1)	07:00 - 08:00

PHILADELPHIA Michael Douglass & Annette Bening ... in The American President Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	PLAZA Adel Imam stars in Sleeping in Honey (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 Toy Story 5:00 p.m.	CONCORD CONCORD "1" Jim Carrey & Jeff Daniels Dumb and Dumber Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD "2" BRAVEHEART Shows: 3:00, 6:00, 9:00	Hampton Theatre & Cinema Today presents Zawad Weld Awad theatre group in the play entitled Five-Star Government Starring comedians: Mahmoud Saimah & Hussein Tubelshat play starts 8:30 p.m.	Nabil & Hisham's Theatre PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights at 8:30 p.m. For reservation please call 625155 - 640155
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Atlanta 1996

Olympic schedule for Wednesday, July 31

ARCHERY

ATLETICA

BASKETBALL

BOXING

CANOE-KAYAK

SPRINT

SWIMMING

TABLE TENNIS

TEAM HANDBALL

WRESTLING

YACHTING

GYMNASIUM

OPENING CEREMONY

CLOSING CEREMONY

PARADE



Olympics schedule for Wednesday, July 31

ARCHERY
Women's individual finals, 1/8

ATHLETICS
Men's decathlon, 100
Men's pole vault, qualifying
Women's 1,500, 1st round
Men's decathlon, long jump
Men's 200, 1st round
Men's decathlon, shot put
Women's 200, 1st and 2nd round
Women's shot put, qualifying
Men's decathlon, high jump
Women's 100 hurdles, semifinals and finals
Women's triple jump, finals
Men's 400 hurdles, semifinals
Women's 400 hurdles, finals
Men's 3,000 steeplechase, semifinals
Women's 800, finals
Men's 800, finals
Men's decathlon, 400
Men's 5,000, 1st round

BADMINTON
Women's doubles, gold medal match
Men's doubles, gold medal match
Women's singles, bronze medal match
Men's singles, bronze medal match
Mixed doubles, bronze medal match

BASKETBALL
Women's classification and quarterfinals

BOXING
Flyweight, featherweight, light welterweight, light middleweight, light heavyweight, and super heavyweight quarterfinals

CANOE-KAYAK (SPRINT)
Men's kayak double 500 prelims and repechage
Men's canoe single 500 prelims and repechage
Women's kayak single 500 prelims and repechage
Men's kayak single 500 prelims and repechage
Men's canoe double 500 prelims and repechage
Women's kayak double 500 prelims and repechage

CYCLING
Men's road race finals

DIVING
Women's springboard semifinals and finals

EQUESTRIAN
Open individual dressage, 1st and 2nd round

FIELD HOCKEY (Men)
6th to 1st place
Men Semifinals

TABLE TENNIS
Women's singles finals
Men's singles semifinals

TEAM HANDBALL (Men)
Egypt vs. European champion
Russia vs. Switzerland
Croatia vs. Sweden
France vs. Germany
Algeria vs. Cuba
Kuwait vs. U.S. (Women)

TENNIS
Hungary vs. Denmark
South Korea vs. Norway

WRESTLING (FREESTYLE)
Men's 48kg, 57kg, 68kg, 82kg, 100kg classification and medal matches

YACHTING
Men's 470 and women's 470 9th and 10th races
Open Soling match races, 1st round finals



Winners in the women's floor exercises, (left to right) bronze medalist Dominique Dawes from the United States, gold medalist Lilia Podkopaieva from Ukraine, and silver medalist Simona Amanar from Romania pose with their medals (Reuters photo)

Nemov medal haul hits six, Miller triumphs

ATLANTA (R) — Gold and bronze for Russia's Alexei Nemov took his Olympic medal haul to six on Monday, while American Shannon Miller capped a great career with her first individual title in a rousing gymnastics finale.

Nemov, 20, won gold on the vault and bronze on the horizontal bar in the closing session to serve notice he may be the next undisputed ruler of men's gymnastics.

The hero of the 1992 games, Vitaly Scherbo, could not match his golden days in Barcelona but came valiantly close as he garnered bronze in all three events on Monday to follow his bronze in the all-round.

Miller wrote herself a storybook ending by winning the one prize that had eluded her — an individual Olympic gold.

Twice world all-round champion and winner of six previous games medals, she captured Olympic gold in her last chance with a graceful beam routine, culminating with a spectacular dismount.

"It's a great note to end things on," said the 19-

year-old Miller, who is leaving the amateur ranks to tour professionally.

Miller's precise landing of a dazzling full twisting double back somersault dismount pushed her score to 9.862, 0.037 of a point better than all-round champion Lilia Podkopaieva of Ukraine. Romanian Gina Gogean took the bronze.

Podkopaieva came back to show she is still the best by claiming gold in the floor exercise with a 9.887 routine that pushed her ahead of Simona Amanar of Romania. American veteran Dominique Dawes took the bronze for her first individual Olympic medal.

The other men's golds went to Germany's Andreas Wecker on the horizontal bar and Rustam Sharipov of Ukraine on parallel bars. Wecker, the Olympic silver medalist in 1992 and 1995 world champion, scored a 9.850 in a spectacular high bar routine that held up despite a series of brilliant performances that came after.

Bulgarian Krasimir Donchev took the silver with 9.825, while Nemov, Scher-

bo and China's Fan Bin all took bronze with scores of 9.800.

Sharipov's smooth routine gave him parallel bars gold by a narrow 0.012 over American Jair Lynch. Scherbo, who won six gold medals at the last games, again took third.

The vault belonged to Nemov, who soared higher and landed softer than his opponents.

South Korean Yeo Hong-Chul tried a more difficult vault but was graded 0.310 of a point behind. Scherbo, though cheered wildly by the 30,000-plus spectators at the Georgia Dome, again could only manage bronze.

Nemov, who has been troubled by a left shoulder injury that will need surgery, secured his first individual Olympic triumph with a sensational second vault.

"It made things more complicated, but the Olympics happen only once every four years," he said of dealing with the injury. "You don't feel anything when you're performing."

Gebrselassie wins on night of African drama; Morocco gets bronze

ATLANTA (R) — Haile Gebrselassie led home a posse of African runners to win the men's 10,000 metres Olympic gold in Atlanta on Monday on a night of high drama for athletes from the continent.

The 23-year-old Ethiopian's stunning victory over world cross country champion Paul Tergat of Kenya was the only gold of the day for Africa but followed two surprise bronze medals and bitter disappointment for Maria Mutola in the women's 800 metres final.

Unknown Davis Kamo-ga, who only took up running seriously two years ago, finished third behind American Michael Johnson in the men's 400 metres final for Uganda's second medal in Olympic history.

Nigerian Falilat Ogunkoya, 26, took bronze in the women's 400 metres final, overshadowed by an Olympic record set by Marie-Jose Perec of France.

Mutola, recovering from a heavy cold, also won a bronze in her race for Mozambique's historic first Olympic medal but it was an upset defeat for the 23-year-old who had dominated the event for the last three years.

Gebrselassie, the world record holder at 10,000 metres, ran a superb tactical race to beat Tergat into second place, with Morocco's Salah Hissou third.

It was the second gold of the Games for Ethiopia after Fatuma Roba's win in Sunday's women's marathon.

Defending Olympic champion Khalid Skah of Morocco finished seventh, more than 30 seconds behind the winner as African runners filled the first eight places in the 10,000 final.

The 28-year-old Kamo-ga, running in only his second major championship, came from last place with 200 metres to go to finish behind Johnson and Briton Roger Black in an Ugandan national record of 44.53 seconds.



Medalists in the men's 10,000m race pose together during the victory ceremony, at the Olympic stadium in Atlanta. Shown (left to right) Salah Hissou of Morocco, bronze medalist, Haile Gebrselassie of Ethiopia, gold medalist, and Paul Tergat of Kenya, silver medalist (Reuters photo)



Winners of the women's 800 metre race show off their medals on the podium in Olympic Stadium. From left is bronze medalist Maria Lurdes Mutola of Mozambique, Russian gold medal winner Svetlana Masterkova and Cuba's Ana Fidelia Quirot, who took the silver medal (Reuters photo)

Uncoached and with just three months' serious training behind him, the Ugandan's medal was a fairytale story.

Ogunkoya set an African record of 49.10 seconds in gaining her bronze, the first medal of the Games for Nigeria.

It was also the first

African record of the Olympics and confirmed Ogunkoya's ever-improving form this season.

Mutola, coughing and spluttering after her final, was philosophical after failing to win her expected gold. "I ran a bad race," she said.

The Mozambican idol said she would withdraw from the 1,500 metres event later this week. "I want to go home and recover," she added.

Africa has now won nine athletics medals at Atlanta, but only two of them have been gold.

U.S. still unbeaten in women's basketball

ATLANTA (R) — U.S. Basketball's leading lady Lisa Leslie has many goals in her life, including an Olympic gold medal, a modelling career, inspiring young girls — and about 25 statistical categories coach Tara Vanderveer reviews every day.

"We have this whole goal sheet," Leslie said after the gold medal favourite American women beat Korea 105-64 to finish their preliminary round 5-0.

"Our goals are to be aggressive, try to rebound the other team, try to get to the foul line first, make the most free throws, free throw percentage, shot percentage, holding the other team to a certain number of shots, it kind of goes on."

Leslie, 24, hopes to show young girls they can compete hard, achieve great things and still be feminine.

"I guess they say I'm kind of the leader of the pack in this femininity role," she said. "I'm just being me. I think we're women first, ladies first, and we were girls first."

"When I go out there to play the game I'm going to be aggressive, I'm going to play hard, we're going to go for the jugular. But when it's time to shower and dress I'm going to come out in a skirt and be a lady. I'm a lady first."

"I think it's good for little girls to see you don't have to wear your clothes all baggy and have your pants hanging down and your hat on backwards to say that you play basketball."

Another goal she has is to build interest in the women's game, and in that regard she regrets that "we don't get on television enough." But she added: "I'm glad that little girls can watch us on television — and little boys too."

Told that some people think the U.S. women's games are "more compelling than the men's Dream Team's crushing exhibitions," she agreed: "We've been getting that response from our crowds and in the streets."

Leslie has not committed herself to one of the two U.S. Women's professional leagues being started up to continue the momentum of the Olympics.

"I definitely want to go into modelling. Maybe for a year I want to put modelling first. I put basketball first for 10 years," said Leslie, who was a model as a child.

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ANKARA (AFP) — The Turkish parliament voted Tuesday to extend until next year the mandate of a Turkey-based multinational force protecting northern Iraqi Kurds from Baghdad. The ruling coalition government partners — the pro-Islamic Welfare Party of Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan and the conservative True Path Party — backed the continuation of Operation Provide Comfort in an open vote in parliament.

The conservative main opposition Motherland Party of former Premier Mesut Yilmaz did not take part in the vote and two smaller left-wing parties voted against the extension, but the coalition partners control enough seats to override opposition.

Had parliament voted against the deal, the force's mandate in Turkish territory would have expired Wednesday.

The move marks a dramatic change in Mr. Erbakan's policies. The Islamist leader staunchly opposed the operation while in opposition.

Political sources said that while Mr. Erbakan was won over by intensive discus-

sions with visiting U.S. teams, he had difficulties in persuading his pro-Islamic Welfare Party to support a fresh mandate.

Under previous governments, Welfare voted 10 times against the extension of the force's mandate.

Diplomatic sources said a parliamentary move to expel the force from Turkey would have irreparably hurt the ties between Ankara and Washington. The Turks' closest ally in NATO.

Washington argues that Operation Provide Comfort, created in the wake of the Gulf war in 1991 to protect northern Iraqi Kurds from attacks by troops loyal to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, is still playing a crucial role in deterring the Iraqi leader.

Iraqi attacks prompted nearly 500,000 Iraqi Kurds to flee to the Turkish border in May 1991.

Under the operation, U.S., British and French aircraft have been staging military surveillance missions over northern Iraq from Incirlik and Diyarbakir air bases in southern Turkey. The force also has a military coordination centre in Zakho in northern Iraq.

Turkey, which spearhead-

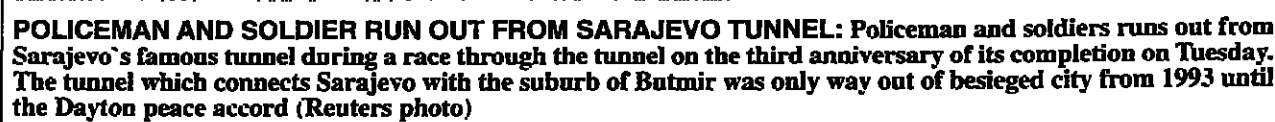
ed efforts for the force's creation at the time, has recently complained that it is acting beyond Ankara's control. It has asked for modifications in the operation's command and structure and the removal of the centre in Zakho.

Many in Turkey think that the force's presence in northern Iraq undermines Baghdad's territorial integrity and could eventually lead to the formation of an independent Kurdish state in the region.

Turkey fears that this development will encourage its separatist Kurds led by the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), which has been fighting for a homeland in the country's southeast.

A recent White House statement reiterated that the United States backed Iraq's territorial integrity and Turkey's fight against the PKK.

The National Security Council, Turkey's highest advisory body — chaired by President Süleyman Demirel and attended by top military commanders — last week backed the extension of the force's mandate until 1997.



IRBID (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Tuesday that food security can only be achieved through tangible increase in food production and through combating desertification. He said that the encroachment of desert on arable land over many years had rendered vast areas of land in the Arab World barren and unproductive.

Addressing the opening session of a symposium at Yarmouk University, "The Past, the Present and the Future of the Desert Regions of the Middle East," the Crown Prince said that solutions to desertification and food problems could best be attained through serious attention to the use of land through international cooperation

and the employment of modern technology.

Calling for a regional charter on water, the Crown Prince said Jordan had always advocated the idea of a comprehensive regional strategy on water to irrigate the land and to green the whole Middle East.

In order to fight desertification, he said attention should be directed to three axes: The social axis which entails health, education, training and social services; the land axis which includes land and land resources of water and energy; and the economic axis which includes agricultural and industrial production, financial and banking services and the infrastructure.

"In discussing desertification one should remember that many of the deserts

were man-made as many people moved to the cities leaving behind unattended land which resulted in tending it dry and lacking the elements of production," the Crown Prince said.

He said most of the developing nations faced food shortages due to poor food production, insufficient water resources and improper utilisation of the soil.

As a result he said the developing countries now import \$25 billion-worth of food up from \$8 billion in 1986 at a time when the world's population continues to grow at the rate of three per cent and food production at only 2.5 per cent.

Urging academic institutions to take active participation in helping the country to increase food production, the Crown Prince said that it was important for academics to go out into the field and not suffice themselves with acting from behind their desks in order to help the country to move from the stage of social development to the stage of social production.

The three-day conference, which is expected to review 60 research papers, was organised by the regional office of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in cooperation with Yarmouk University of Irbid.

Taking part in the meetings are delegates from fifteen countries in addition to a number of regional and international organisations.

OMER, Israel (AFP) — Eleven policemen and 15 bedouins were injured Tuesday when a demonstration against land grabs in southern Israel erupted into violence.

Forty members of the nomadic Tarabin Al Sanaa tribe were arrested during the protest in Omer in the Negev desert, police said. The Israeli Arabs claim that land confiscated by Omer authorities for building belongs to them and that without it they cannot live according to their ancestral traditions.

Some 100 policemen were deployed in Omer on Tuesday to stop protesters from blocking bulldozers working on the land. Extra officers and a helicopter were sent following the violence.

"We are fighting for this land which is registered in our name on the land register," said Mahmud Tarabin Al Sanaa, head of the tribe's young people. "The police repression is one of the worst crimes I have ever seen," he

of land for their flocks of sheep and goats.

A member of Omer municipal council, Amiram Krauss, said the bedouins had "no right" over the confiscated land and that alternative proposals had been put to them.

Mr. Krauss defended the police action and said "it was the bedouins who started the violence." Deputy Housing Minister Meir Porush said \$10 million would be spent on developing seven villages built for the bedouins in the Negev.

Perry arrives in S. Arabia

DUBAI (R) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry arrived in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday for talks on tighter security for U.S. troops there following two deadly bomb attacks on American forces in the kingdom. A Saudi defence ministry official said Mr. Perry arrived in Jeddah where he is expected to meet King Fahd, who spends most of the year in the Red Sea city. Officials last week said Mr. Perry would personally press Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil producer and exporter, to provide at least half of the hundreds of millions of dollars needed to improve security of U.S. troops.

Militants kill policeman in Egypt

MINYA, Egypt (AFP) — Suspected Islamic militants shot dead an off-duty policeman as he worked on his field in southern Egypt on Tuesday, police said. The gunmen shot Nagueh Abdul Kader Al Shahhat, 25, in the head at Abu Qurgas in Minya province before fleeing. The shooting raised to 1,032 the number of people killed since Muslim militants began an armed anti-government campaign in March 1992.

Two 'Lebanese' held on Iberia hijack

FRANKFURT (R) — German police said they detained two men with Lebanese passports on Tuesday after they said they were involved in hijacking a Havana-bound Iberian Airlines flight on Friday. Police in the border city of Saarbruecken said the two, aged 25 and 28, were held as they crossed the border from France and applied for political asylum. They confessed to a role in the hijacking in an interview with asylum officials, a spokesman said.

Missing Israeli soldier's body found

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel has apparently found the body of an Israeli soldier who went missing in 1989 and whose kidnapping and killing were claimed by Islamic militants, officials said Tuesday. The body, believed to be that of missing soldier Ilan Saadon, was discovered with the help of Yasser Arafat's Palestinian National Authority, said army spokesman Oded Ben-Ami. Although the army still had no positive ID, there was "a high probability" the skeleton found Monday eight metres under a recently paved coastal road south of Tel Aviv was Saadon's, said Yacovb Perry, the coordinator of efforts to find MiAs. The Saadon affair was one of many unresolved issues between Israel and the Palestinians, and the discovery of his body, if confirmed, was expected to improve an atmosphere strained since the May election victory of Benjamin Netanyahu.

26 dead in Turkish road crash

ANKARA (R) — Twenty-six people died and 23 were injured when a lorry and a long-distance coach collided in northwestern Turkey on Tuesday, Anatolian news agency said. It said a bus travelling from the eastern Black Sea city of Trabzon to Istanbul and the lorry crashed head-on near the town of Eskipazarı. The injured were taken to two nearby hospitals, Anatolian said.

Saudi defence minister to visit Yemen

DUBAI (AFP) — Saudi Arabia's Defence Minister Prince Sultan bin Abdul Azz will visit Yemen next month to try to complete the mending of fences between the two Arab neighbours, a Yemeni minister said in remarks published Tuesday. "The joint high Saudi-Yemeni committee will meet in Sanaa during the second half of August to give new impetus to the work of the committees tasked with demarcating the borders," Interior Minister Hussein Mohammad Arab told the London-based Arabic daily Al Hayat. The joint committee is chaired by Prince Sultan and Yemeni Speaker of Parliament Sheikh Abdullah Al Ahmar.

Rockets land near UNICEF offices in Kabul

KABUL. Afghanistan (AFP) — A volley of rebel rockets slammed into the Afghan capital on Tuesday, wounding two people and damaging the offices of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), a government spokesman said. Two people were wounded when one of the rockets hit a public park in Kabul's once-posh Wazir Akbar Khan district, a doctor at Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital said. A second rocket landed just outside the UNICEF offices, damaging its few remaining windows and sending shards of debris flying through the air. Nobody was hurt at the UNICEF facility. It was the second time in less than a week that Kabul's UNICEF offices have come under fire.

RAMALLAH (AP) — A Palestinian detainee lay unconscious in a West Bank hospital Tuesday after being whipped, beaten and poked with burning cigarettes in Palestinian custody. Detainee Mahmood Jemayel, who had been held on suspicion of being a vigilante gunman, suffered a broken skull and was bleeding in the brain, said Shawqi Harb, the director of Ramallah Hospital. The Palestinian attorney general, Khaled Kidreh, told the Associated Press he was not familiar with the Jemayel case, and refused comment. Israeli, Palestinian and international human rights groups have complained of mistreatment of detainees in Palestinian jails. Six Palestinians have died in custody since the start of Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in May 1994. Mr. Jemayel was arrested Dec. 18 by Palestinian security forces in the Nablus as part of a roundup of underground gunmen known as the Hawks.

NEW YORK (AFP) — Mounting evidence from the wreckage of TWA Flight 800 suggests that a bomb brought the jetliner down but investigators Tuesday had not yet conclusively proven that leading theory.

Parts of the Boeing 747 and bodies of the victims retrieved from the Atlantic indicate a catastrophic event occurred near the front of the plane, investigators said.

Injuries to victims seated in first class appear more serious than those in coach, they said, and wreckage indicates the plane split in two near the front of the plane, recalling previous jetliner bombings.

"We are all a little frustrated by not being able to find the cause of this occurrence," FBI agent Joseph Cantanessa said, adding that he expected to receive additional results from forensic testing.

Results from some preliminary tests showed the presence of a chemical indicative of explosives, but "none of the serious analyses that have been performed so far have confirmed the presence of some particular item that

everybody seems to be looking for," he continued.

The New York Times quoted an investigator as saying that "there's a one in 1,000 (chance) it was a (mechanical) malfunction." But the investigator, who was not named by the paper, added, "until you get the lab results, you can't rule it out."

Cantantessa confirmed that whatever brought down the plane had an impact on the forward portion of the aircraft, which left New York for Paris before crashing off the coast of Long Island July 17.

ATLANTA (R) — FBI agents investigating the Olympic bombing have questioned a member of an Alabama militia that predicted two months ago an attack would be made on the games, newspapers said on Tuesday.

The Birmingham (Alabama) Post-Herald said FBI agents on Sunday questioned a member of the Gadsden Minutemen whose description was said to match a suspect hunted in the Centennial Olympic Park bombing.

Two people died and 110 were injured in the blast.

The man, 24-year-old Derek Underwood of Pinson, Alabama, was described as thin, with a wispy moustache and beard and a dirty blond ponytail. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution said Mr. Underwood was one of three men interviewed by investigators. "I look like the standard

dead-head you'd see at a Grateful Dead concert." Mr. Underwood told the newspaper. Mr. Underwood denied involvement in the bombing, telling the Atlanta paper: "It was a crime. I am against committing crimes."

Both newspapers said FBI agents appeared to have accepted Mr. Underwood's account that he was at local bar called the Barn when the attack occurred.

BEIRUT (R) — Beirut's constitutional court said on Tuesday a petition lodged by opposition parliamentary deputies to cancel a controversial election law was legal and it would rule on it before voting begins next month.

The 10-member constitutional council went into session to mull the petition issued on Friday by 10 members of parliament to cancel the law passed by parliament this month — arguing it violates the constitutional principle of equality for all citizens.

The rare challenge to the Syrian-backed government by the deputies — six Christians and four Muslim leftists — could cause cancellation of parliamentary elections due to begin on Aug. 18 and plunge the country into confusion if the court rules against the law.

Chief Judge Wajdi Al Mallat told reporters after Tuesday's session that the council he heads will rule on the law before voting starts.

"The appeal has been accepted in form as 10 deputies have signed it and presented it within the set time limit...Now we will discuss its basis," Mr. Mallat said after adjourning the court until Saturday.

The council, whose decisions cannot be appealed against, has 25 days to rule on the law.

It is the first time the court has been asked to rule on the constitutionality of a law. The council was created last year to deal with constitutional issues.

Interior Minister Michel Al Murr, who will supervise the elections, has said that polls will be held on time despite the petition.

The election law passed on July 11 set up different electoral districts for the Christian heartland of Mount Lebanon and the rest of Lebanon.

The law stated that polls would be held in Mount Lebanon governorate, where Christians form a majority, on the basis of six smaller election districts while Lebanon's other four governorates would vote as single constituencies.

This is widely seen as intended to ensure the election of Walid Jumblatt, a key government ally and leader of the Druze minority, who was likely to be swept aside by the Christians if Mount Lebanon voted as a single constituency.

ISLAMABAD (R) — Four Italian climbers conquered the world's second-highest peak K-2 in northern Pakistan Monday, expedition sources said. The sources at the expedition's base camp said the four men — brothers Mario and Salvatore Panzeri, Giulio Maggioni and Lorenzo Mazzioli — reached the 8,611 metre (28,250 foot) Karakoram Range peak at 4.30 p.m. (1130 GMT) from its southeastern Abruzzi Ridge. The mountaineers were on their way down and were expected to reach base camp in a couple of days, the source said. "The weather is perfect and everybody at K-2 is fine," one source said.

LOS ANGELES (R) — A judge ordered actor Robert Downey Jr. Monday into a locked drug rehabilitation centre with 24-hour supervision for an indefinite period. The 31-year-old actor, who was arrested three times in a month, has been held in jail since his last arrest on July 20, when he left the Open Rehabilitation Centre at which he had been ordered to stay by Judge Lawrence Mira as a condition of \$100,000 bail. A prosecutor at Monday's hearing urged Judge Mira to keep Downey in jail. "The more Mr. Downey stays in jail ... The less likely he is to want to visit us again," Deputy District Attorney Ellen Aragon said Judge Mira turned down her request but warned Downey he was giving him a last chance. "What happens at this point in this case is critical to you. Your conduct ... either is going to assist or to a great deal impair," the judge said. He set a progress hearing for Downey for Aug. 23. Downey, nominated for an Academy Award for his title role in the 1992 movie Chaplin, appeared in court in a dark green suit and blue tie.

NAIROBI (AFP) — Kenyan villagers accosted five middle-aged mini-skirted women on their way to church and stripped them naked as a lesson in decent dressing, the daily Nation reported Monday. The villagers in Nyalenda, western Kenya, accused the women of dressing "in a manner likely to attract rapists and also expose young girls to immorality," the newspaper reported. It said a group of young men Sunday tore the women's clothes to shreds as a crowd — including women — cheered them on. The women remained naked for about half an hour before sympathisers offered them traditional wraps.

British cop wants brothels legalised

LONDON (AFP) — It's high time for Britain to give up "absurd" morality laws and start legalising brothels instead, a top-ranking police officer has said. "As a society, we have to start thinking in different ways," West Yorkshire Po-Lice Chief Keith Hellawell told the Independent newspaper in an interview published Monday. "I think we ought to have legally controlled brothels," he said. "We ought to control prostitution for the security of the females and to safeguard health." Brothels could be taxed, he said, adding to government revenues. "I can't see any disadvantages," Chief Hellawell said, "except the one that says that prostitution is wrong."

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